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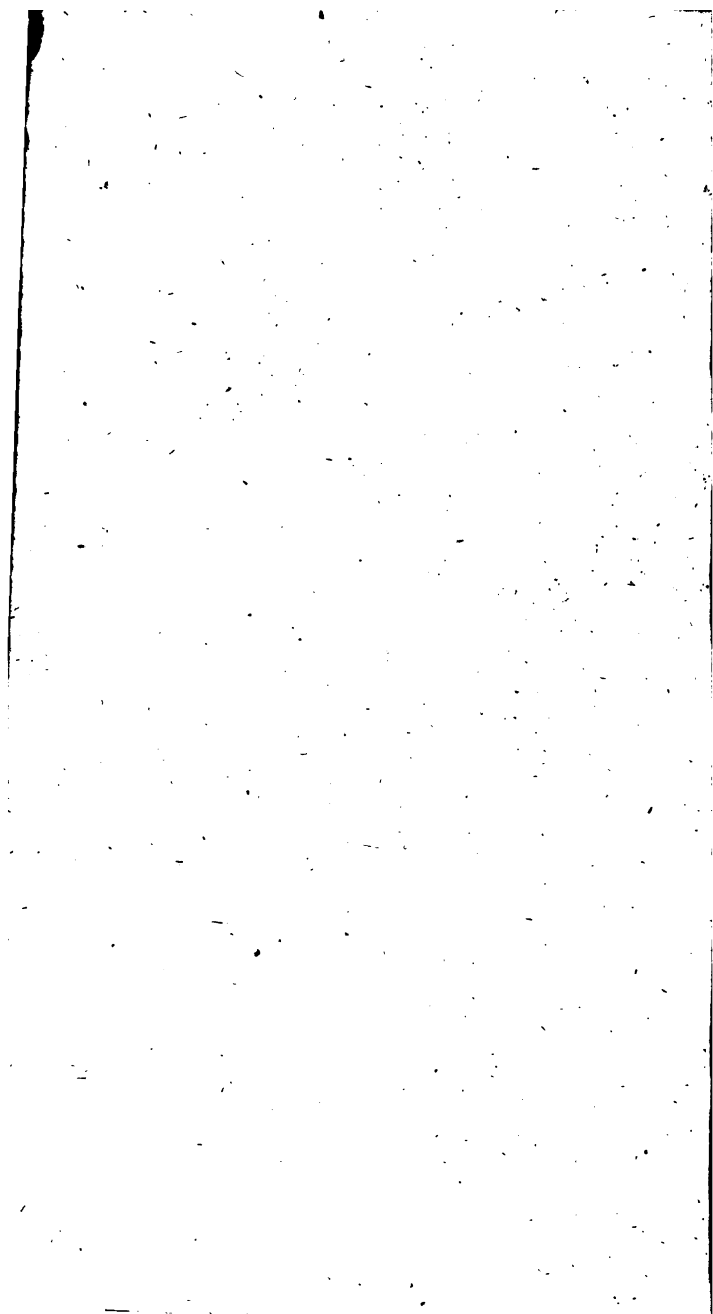
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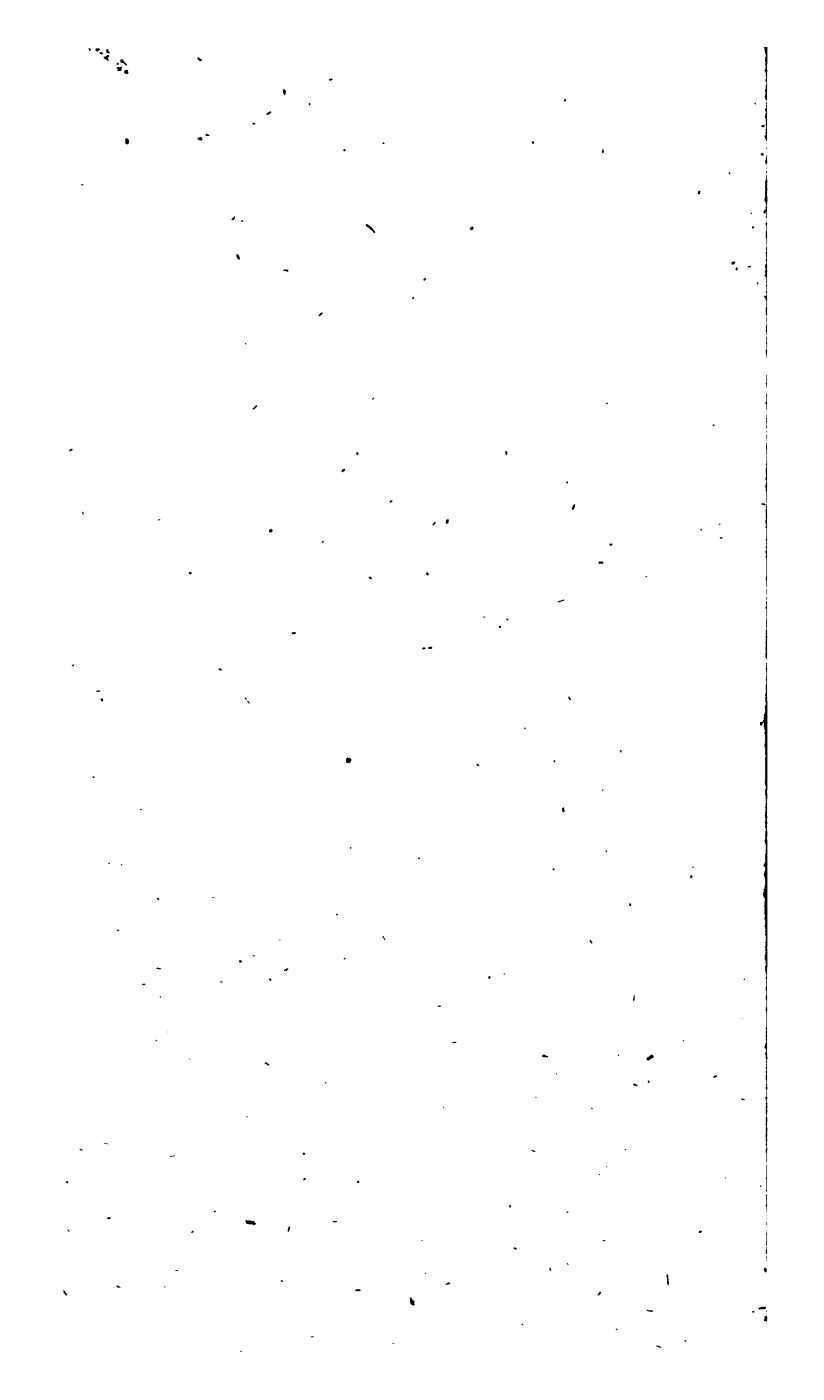


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1804



PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
HISTORY
OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
EUROPEANS
IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BY THE ABBE RAYNAL.

WITH A

New Set of Maps adapted to the Work, and a copious Index.

Volume sixth.

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A
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY
OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
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IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BOOK XVIII CONTINUED.

ENGLISH COLONIES FOUNDED IN PENNSYLVANIA, MARY-
LAND, VIRGINIA, CAROLINA, GEORGIA, AND FLO-
RIDA. GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON ALL THESE SET-
TLEMENTS.

THE treaty of peace of 1763, put in the power of Great Britain that same Florida which had resisted the strength of their arms twenty-three years before. At that time there were no more than six hundred inhabitants. It was with the sale of their hides, and with the provisions they furnished to their garrison, that they were to provide themselves with clothes, and to supply a small part of their wants, which were exceedingly confined. These miserable people went all to Cuba, though convinced that they would be obliged to beg their bread, if their monarch, moved with such an instance of affection, did not provide for their subsistence.

What motive could induce the Spaniards to prefer an oppressive to a free government? Was it superstition, which cannot suffer the altars of the heretics near its own? Was it prejudice, which renders suspicious the morals

and the probity of those who profess a different religion? Was it the fear of seduction for themselves, and still more for their children? Long accustomed to idleness, did they imagine that they should be compelled to labour? Or hath man so bad an opinion of man, that he should rather choose to dispose of himself and his fate, than to abandon it to the mercy of his fellow-creature? However it may be, nothing but a desert remained to the power that obtained the possession; but was it not an acquisition to lose inhabitants not inured to fatigue, and who would never have been well affected?

Great Britain congratulated itself upon the acquisition of the property of an immense province, the limits of which were still extended as far as the Mississippi, by the cession of one part of Louisiana. That power had for a long time been desirous of settling on a territory which would open an easy communication to them with the richest of the Spanish colonies. They did not give up the hopes of a smuggling trade, but they were aware that this precarious and momentary advantage was not sufficient to render their conquests flourishing, and they turned their labours and expectations principally towards cultivation.

What hath been done by England, and what she may expect to do in Florida.

THE new acquisition was divided into two governments. It was thought that this would be a powerful inducement to carry on with greater zeal, and to direct with more vigour, the cultivation of the lands. Ministry might also have determined upon this division, in expectation of always finding more submission in two separate provinces than in one alone.

Saint Augustine became the capital of East Florida, and Pensacola of West Florida. These capitals, which were at the same time tolerable good harbours, did not undoubtedly unite all the conveniences they were susceptible of, but it was still a very fortunate circumstance to find those which they really did possess. The other colonies did not enjoy this advantage at their origin.

The first colonists who settled in these countries were half-pay officers and disbanded soldiers. All those among

them who had served in America and were settled there, obtained the grant of a piece of land proportionable to their rank. This favour was not extended to all the army that had fought in the New World. It would have been apprehended, that the military men of the three kingdoms who were in the same situation, might be tempted to forsake the mother country, already too much exhausted by the last hostilities.

The new colony received also cultivators from the neighbouring settlements, from the mother country, and from several protestant states. It also obtained some, whose arrival was a matter of astonishment to both hemispheres.

The Greeks groan under the Ottoman tyranny, and must be inclined to shake off this detested yoke. This was the opinion of Dr. Turnbull, when in 1767, he went to offer an asylum in British America to the inhabitants of the Peloponnesus. Several of them yielded to his solicitations; and for the sum of one hundred guineas he obtained leave from the government of the place to embark them at Modon. He landed in Corsica and at Minorca, and prevailed also upon some of the inhabitants of those two islands to follow him.

The emigrants, to the number of a thousand, arrived in East Florida with their prudent conductor, where sixty thousand acres of land were granted to them. This would have been an immense possession, even if the climate had not destroyed any of them; but they had unfortunately been so much thwarted by the winds as to prevent their landing before summer, which is a dangerous season, and which destroyed one quarter of their number. They were mostly the old people who perished. They were numerous, because the judicious Turnbull chose to carry none with him but whole families.

Those who escaped this first disaster have since enjoyed perfect health, which has only been affected by a few fevers. The men are become stronger in their constitutions, and the women, who, on account of the change of climate, did not breed often at first, are at present very fruitful. It is presumed that the children will be taller than

they would have been in the country from whence their parents came.

The small colony have received from their founder institutions, which they have themselves approved, and which are observed. They are still no more than one entire family, where the spirit of concord must be kept up for a long time. On the first of January 1776, they had already cleared two thousand three hundred acres of a tolerably fertile soil. They had animals sufficient for their subsistence and for their labour. Their crops were sufficient for their own consumption, and they sold 67,500 livres, [2,812l. 10s.] worth of indigo. The industry and activity by which they are distinguished, give great expectations from time and experience.

Why should not Athens and Lacedemon be one day revived in North America? Why should not the city of Turnbull become in a few centuries the residence of politeness, of the fine arts, and of eloquence? The new colony is less distant from this flourishing state than were the barbarous Pelasgians from the fellow-citizens of Pericles. What difference there is between a settlement conceived and founded by a wise and pacific man, and the conquests of a long series of avaricious, extravagant, and sanguinary, men; between the present state of South America and what it might have been, had those who discovered it, took possession of it and laid it waste, been animated with the same spirit as the worthy Turnbull? Will not nations learn by his example, that the foundation of a colony requires more wisdom than expence? The universe hath been peopled by one man and one woman only.

The two Floridas, which in 1769 did not export productions to the amount of more than 673,209 livres 18 sols 9 deniers [about 28,045l. 8s. 3½d.] have a remarkable advantage over the rest of this great continent. Situated in a great measure between two seas, they have nothing to fear from the frozen winds, nor from the unforeseen variations in the temperature of the air, which at all seasons occasion such frequent and fatal devastations in the neighbourhood. It is therefore to be hoped that the vine, the olive, the cotton tree, and other delicate plants, will prosper there sooner and better than in any of the adjacent provinces. In 1774, the society instituted

in London for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, and sciences, gave a gold medal to Mr. Strachey, for his having produced as fine indigo as that which comes from Guatimala. Although, in the first paroxysms of enthusiasm, the qualities of this production have been but moderately attended to, yet it will become a source of riches for the colony.

The soil of East Florida, however, being a great deal too sandy, constantly drove away all men who were desirous of making a rapid fortune. It would scarce have been peopled, except by some extraordinary event. The troubles with which North America hath been agitated, have driven to that commonly barren soil a few peaceful citizens, who had a settled aversion for disputes; and a still greater number of men, who, either from ambition, habit, or prejudice, were devoted to the interest of the mother country.

The same inducements have given colonists to the other Florida, which is much more fertile, especially on the pleasant borders of the Mississippi. This province hath had the advantage to furnish Jamaica, and several of the British islands in the West-Indies with wood, and with various articles, which they formerly received from the several countries of New England. This population would have been still more rapid if the coasts of Pensacola had been more accessible, and if its harbours had been less infested with worms. How greatly might the improvements of the two provinces be accelerated, if the new sovereigns of North America would depart from the maxims they have uniformly pursued, and would condescend to intermarriages with Indian families! And for what reason should this method of civilizing the savage tribes, which has been so successfully employed by the most enlightened politicians, be rejected by a free people, who, from their principles, must admit a greater equality than other nations? Would the English then be still reduced to the cruel alternative of seeing their crops burnt, and their husbandmen massacred, or of persecuting without intermission, and exterminating without pity, those wandering bands of natives? Ought they not to prefer to sanguinary and inglorious hostilities a humane

and infallible method of disarming the only enemy that remains to disturb their tranquillity?

The English flatter themselves, that, without the assistance of these alliances, they shall soon be freed from the little interruption that remains. It is the fate of savage nations, say they, to waste away in proportion as the people of civilized states come to settle among them. Unable to submit to the labour of cultivation, and failing of their usual subsistence from the chase, they are reduced to the necessity of abandoning all those tracts of lands which industry and activity have undertaken to clear. This is actually the case with all the natives bordering on the European settlements. They keep daily retiring further into the woods; they fall back upon the Assenipouals and Hudsons bay, where they must necessarily encroach upon each other, and in a short time must perish for want of subsistence.

But before this total destruction is brought about, events of a very serious nature may occur. We have not yet forgotten the generous Pondiack. That formidable warrior had broken with the English in 1762. Major Roberts, who was employed to reconcile him, sent him a present of brandy. Some Iroquois, who were standing round their chief, shuddered at the sight of this liquor. Not doubting but that it was poisoned, they insisted that he should not accept so suspicious a present. "How can it be", said their leader, "that a man, who knows my esteem for him, and the signal services I have done him, should entertain a thought of taking away my life? Saying this, he received and drank the brandy with a confidence equal to that of the most renowned hero of antiquity.

By many instances of magnanimity similar to this, the eyes of the savage nations had all been fixed upon Pondiack. His design was to unite them in a body for the defence of their lands and independence. Several unfortunate circumstances concurred to defeat this grand project; but it may be resumed, and it is not impossible that it may succeed. The usurpers would then be under the necessity of protecting their frontier against an enemy that hath none of those expences to sustain, or evils to dread, which war brings with it among civilized nations; and will find the advantages they have promised themselves

from conquests made at the expence of so much treasure and so much blood, considerably retarded at least, if not entirely lost. Should the English disdain an advice dictated to them through me by justice and humanity, may another Pondiack arise from his ashes, and consummate his plan.

THE two Floridas, part of Louisiana, and all Canada, obtained at the same era, either by conquest or treaty, rendered the English masters of all that space which extends from the river St.

*Extent of the
British dominions
in North America.*

Lawrence to the Mississippi; so that without reckoning Hudsons' bays; Newfoundland, and the other islands of North America, they would have been in possession of the most extensive empire that ever was formed upon the face of the globe.

This vast territory is divided from north to south by a chain of high mountains, which alternately receding from and approaching to the coast, leave between them and the ocean, a tract of land of a hundred and fifty, two hundred, and sometimes three hundred, miles in breadth. Beyond these Apalachian mountains is an immense desert, into which some travellers have ventured as far as eight hundred leagues without finding an end to it. It is supposed that the rivers at the extremity of these uncultivated regions have a communication with the South sea. If this conjecture, which is not destitute of probability, should be confirmed by experience, England would unite in her colonies all the branches of communication and commerce of the world. As her territories extend from one American sea to the other, she may be said to join the four quarters of the world. From all her European ports, from all her African settlements, she freights and sends out ships to the New World. From her maritime settlements in the east she would have a direct channel to the West-Indies by the Pacific ocean. She would discover those slips of land, or branches of the sea, the isthmus of the strait, which lies between the northren extremities of Asia and America. By the vast extent of her colonies, she would have in her own power all the avenues of trade,

and would secure all the advantages of it by her numerous fleets. Perhaps, by having the empire of all the seas, she might aspire to the supremacy of both worlds. But it is not in the destiny of any single nation to attain to such a pitch of greatness. Is then extent of dominion so flattering an object, when conquests are made only to be lost again? Let the Romans speak! Does it constitute power, to possess such a share of the globe, that some part shall always be enlightened by the rays of the sun, if while we reign in one world we are to languish in obscurity in the other? Let the Spaniards answer!

The English will be happy if they can preserve, by the means of culture and navigation, an empire, which must ever be found too extensive, when it cannot be maintained without bloodshed. But as this is the price which ambition must always pay for the success of its enterprises, it is by commerce alone that conquests can become valuable to a maritime power. Never did war procure for any conqueror a territory more improveable by human industry than that of the northern continent of America. Although the land in general be so low near the sea, that in many parts it is scarce distinguishable from the top of the mainmast, even after anchoring in fourteen fathom, yet the coast is very easy of access, because the depth diminishes insensibly as you advance. From this circumstance, it is easy to determine exactly by the line the distance of the main land. Beside this, the mariner has another sign, which is the appearance of trees, that, seeming to rise out of the sea, form an enchanting object to his view upon a shore, which presents roads and harbours without number, for the reception and preservation of shipping.

The productions of the earth arise in great abundance from a soil newly cleared; but, on the other hand, they are a long time before they come to maturity. Many plants are even so late in flower, that the winter prevents their ripening; while, on our continent, both the fruit and the seed of them are gathered in a more northern latitude. What can be the cause of this phenomenon? Before the arrival of the Europeans, the North Americans, living upon the produce of their hunting and fishery, left

their lands totally uncultivated. The whole country was covered with woods and thickets. Under the shade of these forests grew a multitude of plants. The leaves, which fell every winter from the trees, formed a bed three or four inches thick. Before the damps had quite rotted this species of manure, the summer came on ; and nature, left entirely to herself, continued heaping incessantly upon each other these effects of her fertility. The plants buried under wet leaves, through which they with difficulty made their way in a long course of time, became accustomed to a long vegetation. The force of culture has not yet been able to subdue the habit fixed and confirmed by ages, nor have the dispositions of nature given way to the influence of art. But this climate, so long unknown or neglected by mankind, presents them with advantages which supply the defects and ill consequences of that omission.

It produces almost all the trees that *Trees peculiar to*
are natives of our climate. It has also *North America.*
others peculiar to itself, among which
are the sugar maple, and the candleberry myrtle.

The latter, thus named on account of its produce, is a branching tortuous shrub, rather irregular, and which delights in a moist soil. It is therefore seldom found at any distance from the sea, or from large rivers. Its leaves, alternately disposed, are narrow, entire, or denticulated, and always covered with small gilded points, which are almost imperceptible. It bears male and female flowers, upon two different plants. The first bears a bezil, every scale of which bears six stamina, the second, disposed alike on young sprigs, have, instead of stamina, an ovary, surmounted with styles, which becomes a very small, hard, and spherical, shell, which is covered with a granulated, white, and unctuous, substance. These fruits, which together appear like a bunch of grapes, are gathered at the end of the autumn, and thrown into boiling water. The substance with which they are covered detaches itself, swims at the top, and is skimmed off. As soon as this is grown cold, it is commonly of a dirty green colour.

To purify it, it is boiled a second time, when it becomes transparent, and acquires an agreeable green colour.

This substance, which in quality and consistence is a medium between tallow and wax, supplied the place of both to the first Europeans who landed in this country. The dearth of it has occasioned it to be less used, in proportion as the number of domestic animals hath increased. Nevertheless, as it burns slower than tallow, is less subject to melt, and has not that disagreeable smell, it is still preferred, wherever it can be procured at a moderate price. If it be mixed with a fourth part of tallow, it burns much better; but this is not its only property. It serves to make excellent soap and plasters for wounds: it is even employed for the purpose of sealing letters. The sugar maple merits no less attention than the candleberry myrtle, as may be conceived from its name.

This tree, the nature of which is to flourish by the side of streams, or in marshy places, grows to the height of the oak. Its trunk is straight and cylindrical, and covered with a tolerably thin bark. Its branches, which are always opposite, are covered with leaves disposed in the same manner, which are whitish underneath, and are divided into five acute lobes. Its flowers, collected in clusters, have a calix, with five divisions, charged with as many petals, and eight stamina, which are sometimes abortive. In the centre of them is a pistil, which becomes a fruit, composed of two pods, pressed together, and closed at the bottom, open and alated at the top, and filled with a single seed.

In the month of March, an incision, of the depth of three or four inches, is made at the lower part of the trunk of the maple. A pipe is put into the orifice, through which the juice that flows from it is conveyed into a vessel placed to receive it. The young trees are so full of this liquor, that in half an hour they will fill a quart bottle. The old ones afford less, but of much better quality. No more than one incision, or two at most, can be made, without draining and weakening the tree. If three or four pipes be applied, it soon dies.

The sap of this tree has naturally the flavour of honey. To reduce it to sugar, it is evaporated by fire, till it has

acquired the consistence of a thick syrup. It is then poured into moulds of earthen ware, or bark of the birch tree. The syrup hardens as it cools, and becomes a red kind of sugar, almost transparent, and pleasant enough to the taste. To give it a whiteness, flour is sometimes mixed up with it in the making; but this ingredient always changes the flavour of it. This kind of sugar is used for the same purposes as that which is made from canes; but eighteen or twenty pounds of juice go to the making of one pound of sugar, so that it can be of no great use in trade. Honey is the sugar of the savages of our countries; the maple is the sugar of the savages of America. Nature displays in all parts its sweets and its wonders.

AMIDST the multitude of birds *Birds peculiar to* which inhabit the forests of North Ame- *North America.* rica, there is one extremely singular in its kind; this is the humming bird; a species of which, on account of its smallness, is called *Poiseau mouche*, or the fly bird. Its beak is long and pointed like a needle, and its claws are no bigger than a common pin. Upon its head it has a black tuft of incomparable beauty. Its breast is a of a rose colour, and its belly white as milk. The back, wings, and tail, are grey, bordered with silver, and streaked with the brightest gold. The down, which covers all the plumage of this little bird, gives it so delicate a cast, that it resembles a velvet flower, the beauty of which fades on the slightest touch.

The spring is the only season for this charming bird. Its nest, perched on the middle of a bough, is covered on the outside with a grey and greenish moss, and on the inside lined with a very soft down gathered from yellow flowers. This nest is half an inch in depth, and about an inch in diameter. There are never found more than two eggs in it, about the size of the smallest peas. Many attempts have been made to rear the young ones; but they have never lived more than three weeks or a month at most.

The humming bird lives entirely on the juice of flowers, fluttering from one to another, like the bees. Sometimes it buries itself in the calix of the largest flowers.

Its flight produces a buzzing noise like that of a spinning wheel. When tired, it lights upon the nearest tree or stake; rests a few minutes, and flies again to the flowers. Notwithstanding its weakness, it does not appear timid; but will suffer a man to approach within eight or ten feet of it.

Who would imagine, that so diminutive an animal, could be malicious, passionate, and quarrelsome. These birds are often seen fighting together with great fury and obstinacy. The strokes they give with their beak are so sudden and so quick, that they are not distinguishable by the eye. Their wings move with such agility, that they seem not to have any motion. They are more heard than seen; and their noise resembles that of a sparrow.

These little birds are all impatience. When they come near a flower, if they find it faded and withered, they tear all the leaves asunder. The precipitation with which they peck it, betrays, as it is said, the rage with which they are animated. Towards the end of the summer, thousands of flowers may be seen stript of all their leaves by the fury of the humming birds. It may be doubted, however, whether this mark of resentment is not rather an effect of hunger than of an unnecessarily destructive instinct.

Every species of beings hath another that is an enemy to it. That of the fly bird is a large spider, which is very greedy of its eggs. This is the sword which is continually suspended over the tyrant's head.

North America was formerly devoured by insects. As the air was not then purified, the ground cleared, the woods cut down, nor the waters drained off, these little animals destroyed, without opposition, all the productions of nature. None of them were useful to mankind. There is only one at present, which is the bee; but this is supposed to have been carried from the Old to the New World. The savages call it the English fly; and it is only found near the coasts. These circumstances announce it to be of foreign original. The bees fly in numerous swarms through the forests of the New World. Their numbers are continually increasing, and their honey, which is converting to several uses, supplies many persons with

food. Their wax becomes daily a considerable branch of trade.

THE bee is not the only present which Europe has had it in her power to make to America. She has enriched her also with a breed of domestic animals, for the savages had none. America had not yet associated beasts with men in the labours of cultivation, when the Europeans had carried over thither oxen, sheep, and horses. They were all, at first, exposed, as well as man, to epidemical diseases. If the contagion did not attack them, as it did their proud sovereign, in the source even of their generation, several of their species were at least reproduced with much difficulty. All of them, except the hog, lost much of their strength and size. It was not till late, and that only in some places, that they recovered their original properties. Without doubt, it was the climate, the nature of the air, and the soil, which prevented the success of their transplantation. Such is the law of climates, which wills every people, every animal and vegetable species, to grow and flourish in its native soil. The love of their country seems an ordinance of nature prescribed to all beings, as the desire of preserving their existence.

YET there are certain correspondences of climate, which form exceptions to the general rule against the transplanting of animals and plants. When the English first landed on the North American continent, the wandering inhabitants of those desolate regions had scarcely arrived at the cultivation of a small quantity of maize, a plant which resembles a reed. Its leaves, which are large, and very long, surround, at their basis, the stem, which is round and knotty at intervals. It is terminated by a panicle of male flowers. Each of the bunches which compose it, hath two flowers, covered with two common scales; and each flower hath three stamina, inclosed between two scales proper to them. At the axilla of the inferior leaves, the female flowers are

Europe supplies North America with domestic animals.

European grain hath been cultivated in North America.

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found, disposed in a very close cluster, upon a thick and fleshy axis, concealed under several coverings. The pistil of these flowers, surrounded with some small scales, and surmounted with a long style, becomes a farinaceous seed, almost spherical, and half sunk into the common axis. Its maturity is known by its colour, and by the separation of the covering, through which the blade of covering may be seen.

This species of corn, unknown at that time in Europe, was the only one known in the New World. The culture of it was by no means difficult. The savages contented themselves with taking off the turf, making a few holes in the ground with a stick, and throwing into each of them a single grain, which produced two hundred and fifty or three hundred. The method of preparing it for food was not more complicated. They pounded it in a wooden or stone mortar, and made it into a paste, which they baked under embers. They often ate it roasted merely upon the coals.

The maize has many advantages. Its leaves are useful in feeding cattle; a circumstance of great moment where there are very few meadows. A hungry, light, sandy soil, agrees best with this plant. The seed may be frozen in the spring two or three times without impairing the harvest. In short it is of all plants the one that is least injured by the excess of drought or moisture.

These causes, which introduced the cultivation of it in that part of the world, induced the English to preserve and even promote it in their settlements. They sold it to the southern part of Europe, and to the East-Indies, and employed it for their own use. They did not, however, neglect to enrich their plantations with European grains, all of which succeeded, though not so perfectly as in their native soil. With the superfluity of their harvests, the produce of their herds, and the clearing of their forests, the colonists formed a trade with all the wealthiest and most populous provinces of the New World.

The mother country, finding that her northern colonies had supplanted her in her trade with South America, and fearing that they would soon become her rivals, even in Europe, at all the markets for salt provisions and corn,

endeavoured to divert their industry to objects that might be more useful to her. An opportunity soon presented itself.

THE greatest part of the pitch and *North America* tar the English wanted for their fleet, *both supplied Eu-* used to be furnished by Sweden. In *rope with naval* 1703, that state was so blind to its true *stores.* interest, as to lay this important branch of commerce under the restrictions of an exclusive charter. The first effect of this monopoly was a sudden and considerable increase of price. England, taking advantage of this blunder of the Swedes, encouraged, by considerable premiums, the importation of all sorts of naval stores which North America could furnish.

These rewards did not immediately produce the effect that was expected from them. A bloody war, raging in each of the four quarters of the world prevented both the mother country and the colonies from giving to this beginning revolution in commerce, the attention which it merited. The northern nations, which had all the same motives of interest, taking this inaction, which was only occasioned by the hurry of a war, for an absolute proof of inability, thought they might without danger lay every restrictive clause upon the exportation of marine stores, that could contribute to enhance the price of them. For this purpose they entered into mutual engagements which were made public in 1718, a time, when all the maritime powers still felt the effects of a war that had continued fourteen years.

England was alarmed at so odious a convention. She dispatched to America men of sufficient ability to convince the inhabitants how necessary it was for them to assist the views of the mother country; and of sufficient experience to direct their first attempts towards great objects, without making them pass through these minute details, which quickly extinguish an ardour excited with difficulty. In a very short time, such quantities of pitch, tar, turpentine, yards, and masts, were brought into the harbours of Great Britain, that she was enabled to supply the nations around her.

This sudden success blinded the British government. The cheapness of the naval stores furnished by the colonies, in comparison of those which were brought from the Baltic, gave them an advantage, which seemed to ensure a constant preference. Upon this the ministry concluded that the bounties might be withdrawn. But they had not taken into their calculation the difference of freight, which was entirely in favour of their rivals. A total stop ensued in this branch of trade, and made them sensible of their error. In 1729, they revived the bounties; which, though they were not laid so high as formerly, were sufficient to give to the vent of American stores the greatest superiority, at least in England, over those of the northern nations.

The woods, though they constituted one of the principal riches of the colonies, had hitherto been overlooked by the governors of the mother country. The produce of them had long been exported by the English to Spain, Portugal, and the different markets in the Mediterranean, where it was bought up for building and other uses. As these traders did not take in return merchandize sufficient to complete their cargoes, it had been a practice with the Hamburgers, and even the Dutch, to import on their bottoms the produce of the most fertile climates of Europe. This double trade of export, and carrying the merchandize of other nations, had considerably augmented the British navigation. The parliament, being informed of this advantage, in the year 1722, immediately exempted the timber of the colonies from all those duties of importation to which Russian, Swedish, and Danish timber are subject. This first favour was followed by a bounty, which, at the same time that it comprehended every species of wood in general, was principally calculated for those which are employed in ship building. Unfortunately the materials of the New World were found to be very inferior in quality to those of the Old; they were, however, employed preferably to the latter by the English navy. England drew its yards and its masts from North America, and was likewise desirous of getting sails and rigging from thence.

The French protestants, who, when driven from their country by a prince, become infected with a spirit of bi-

gotry, carried their national industry into all the countries of his enemies, and taught England the value of flax and hemp, two commodities of the utmost importance to a maritime power. Both these plants were cultivated with success in Scotland and Ireland; but the manufactures of the nation were chiefly supplied with them from Russia. To put a stop to this foreign importation, it was proposed to grant a bounty to North America of 135 livres [5l. 12s.] for every ton of these articles. This was doing a great deal; and yet so considerable an encouragement had no great success. There were not many lands in that part of the New World which were good enough for a production which prospers only upon an excellent soil. This region abounds more in iron, that metal which is destined to conquer the gold and silver of the south.

THIS most serviceable of metals, so necessary to mankind, was unknown to the Americans, till the Europeans taught them the most fatal use of it, that of making weapons. The English themselves long neglected the iron mines, which nature had lavished on the continent where they were settled. That channel of wealth had been diverted from the mother country by being clogged with enormous duties. The proprietors of the national mines, in concert with those of the coppice woods, which are used in the working of them, had procured imposts to be laid on them that amounted to a prohibition. By corruption, intrigue, and sophistry, these enemies to the public good had stifled a composition which would have been fatal to their interests. At length the government took the first step towards a right conduct. The importation of American iron into the port of London was granted duty free; but at the same time it was forbidden to be carried to any other ports, or even more than ten miles inland. This whimsical restriction continued till 1757. At that time the general voice of the people called upon the parliament to repeal an ordinance so manifestly contrary to every principle of public utility, and to extend to the whole kingdom a privilege which had been granted exclusively to the capital.

The iron of North America hath been conveyed into our climates.

weak, and too difficult, to preserve. The country was too full of woods, which attract and confine the moist and hot vapours; the seasons were too unsettled, and the insects too numerous near the forests, to suffer a production to grow up and prosper, of which the English, and all other nations who have it not, are so ambitious. The time will come, perhaps, when this country will furnish a liquor, in the preparation of which most parts of the globe are employed, and the use of which many other parts are so much attached to: but this event will not happen for several centuries, and after several repeated experiments. It is most probable that the harvest of the vine will be proceeded by that of silk; the work of that little worm which clothes mankind with the leaves of trees digested in its entrails.

A very considerable sum was annually exported from Great Britain for the purchase of this rich production; it was therefore determined to obtain it from Carolina, which, from the mildness of the climate, and the great abundance of mulberry trees, seemed favourable to the project. Some attempts made by the government to attract some Switzers into the colony were yet more successful than could have been expected. Yet the progress of this branch of trade has not been so answerable to so promising a beginning. The blame has been laid on the inhabitants, who buying only negro men, from whom they received an immediate and certain profit, neglected to have women, who with their children might have been employed in bringing up silk worms, an occupation suitable to the weakness of that sex, and to the tenderest age. But it ought to have been considered, that men, coming from another hemisphere into a rude uncultivated country, would apply their first care to the cultivation of esculent plants, breeding cattle, and the toils of immediate necessity. This is the natural and constant proceeding of well-governed states. From agriculture, which is the source of population, they rise to the arts of luxury; and the arts of luxury nourish commerce, which is the child of industry and parent of wealth. In 1769, the parliament were of opinion that this period was at length arrived; and they granted a bounty of 25 per cent. for seven years on all raw silks imported from the colonies, a bounty of

20 per cent for seven years following, and for seven years after that a bounty of 15 per cent. This encouragement would necessarily be followed by the cultivation of cotton and olive trees, and of several other plants. The nation thought that there are few productions, either of Europe or Asia, which might not be transplanted and cultivated with more or less success on some of the vast countries of North America. Men only were wanting; and no proper precautions were neglected to increase their number.

THE first persons who landed in this desert and savage region were Englishmen, who had been persecuted at home for their civil and religious opinions.

With what kind of men the provinces of North America were peopled.

It was not to be expected that this first emigration would be attended with important consequences. The inhabitants of Great Britain are so strongly attached to their native soil, that nothing less than civil wars or revolutions can incline those among them who have any property, character, or industry, to a change of climate and country: for which reason, the re-establishment of public tranquillity in the mother country was likely to put an insurmountable bar to the progress of American cultivation.

Add to this, that the English, though naturally active, ambitious, and enterprising, were ill adapted to the business of clearing the soil of the New World. Accustomed to a quiet life, ease, and many conveniences, nothing but the enthusiasm of religion and politics could support them under the labours, miseries, wants, and calamities, inseparable from new plantations.

It is further to be observed, that, though England might have been able to overcome these difficulties, she ought not to have wished to do it. Without doubt, the founding of colonies, rendering them flourishing, and enriching herself with their productions, was an advantageous prospect to her; but those advantages would be dearly purchased at the expence of her own population.

Happily for her, the intolerant and despotic spirit that prevailed in most countries in Europe, forced numberless victims to take refuge in an uncultivated tract, which, in its state of desolation, seemed to implore that assistance

for itself which it offered to the unfortunate. These men, who had escaped from the rod of tyranny, in crossing the seas, abandoned all the hopes of return, and attached themselves for ever to a country, which at the same time afforded them an asylum and an easy quiet subsistence. Their good fortune could not remain for ever unknown. Multitudes, particularly from Germany, flocked to partake of it. One of the advantages which the emigrants proposed to themselves was the becoming citizens throughout the whole extent of the British dominions, after a residence of seven years in any of the colonies.

While tyranny and persecution were destroying and exhausting population in Europe, English America was beginning to be filled with three sorts of inhabitants. The first class, which is the most numerous, consists of freemen.

The Europeans, who over-run and desolate the globe for these three centuries past, have scattered colonies in most of the points of its circumference; and their race hath more or less degenerated everywhere. The English settlements of North America appeared to have undergone a similar fate. The inhabitants were universally thought to be less robust in labour, less powerful in war, and less adapted to the arts, than their ancestors. Because the care of clearing the lands, of purifying the air, of altering the climate, and of improving nature, had absorbed all the faculties of this people; transplanted under another sky, it was concluded that they were degenerated, and unable to elevate their minds to any complicated speculations.

In order to dispel this fatal prejudice, it became necessary that a Franklin should teach the philosophers of our continent the art of governing the thunder. It was necessary that the pupils of this illustrious man should throw a striking light upon several branches of the natural sciences. It was necessary that eloquence should renew, in that part of the New World, those strong and rapid impressions which it had made in the proudest republics of antiquity. It was necessary that the rights of mankind, and the rights of nations, should be firmly established there, in original writings, which will be the delight and the consolation of the most distant ages.

Works of imagination, and of taste, will soon follow those of reasoning and observation. New England will soon, perhaps, be able to quote its Homer, its Theocritus, and its Sophocles. Neither assistance, nor masters, nor models, are now wanting. Education is diffused, and improves daily. There are, in proportion, more persons well brought up, and they have more leisure for prosecuting the bent of their genius, than men have in Europe, where the education, even of youth, is often contrary to the progress and to the unfolding of genius and of reason.

By a singular contrast with the Old World, in which the arts have passed from the south towards the north, we shall find that in the New World the north will serve to enlighten the southern parts. Hitherto, the mind, as well as the body, hath appeared enervated in the West-Indies. Men in those parts, endowed with vivacity and early penetration, have a quick conception, but they do not persevere in study, nor do they use themselves to long continued thought. Most of them have a great facility, for acquiring every kind of knowledge, but have no decisive turn for any particular science. As they are forward, and come to maturity before us, they are far from perfection, and we are almost as near to it as we can be. The glory and happiness of producing a change in their dispositions must be the work of English America. But it is necessary that it should take steps conformable to this noble design, and aim, by justice and laudable means, to form a set of people fit for the creation of a New World. This is what hath not yet been done.

The second class of colonists was formerly composed of malefactors which the mother country transported, after condemnation, to America, and who were bound to a servitude of seven or fourteen years to the planters who had purchased them from the courts of justice. These corrupt men, always disposed to commit fresh crimes, have at length been universally neglected.

They have been replaced by indigent persons, whom the impossibility of subsisting in Europe has driven into the New World. After having bought and sold the negro, there was but one crime which could go beyond this: this was, to sell one's countryman, without having bought him; and to find some person who would buy

him : accordingly this has been done. Having embarked without being able to pay for their passage, these wretched men are at the disposal of their captain, who sells them to whom he chooses. This sort of slavery is for a longer or shorter time ; but it can never exceed eight years. If among these emigrants there are any who are not of age, their servitude lasts till they arrive at that period, which is fixed at twenty-one for the boys, and eighteen for the girls.

None of those who are contracted for have a right to marry without the approbation of their master, who sets what price he chooses on his consent. If any one of them should run away, and be retaken, he is to serve a week for each days absence, a month for every week, and six months for one. The proprietor who does not think proper to receive again one who has deserted from his service, may sell him to whom he chooses ; but that is only for the term of the first contract. Besides, this service doth not carry any ignominy with it ; and the purchaser does all that lies in his power to lessen the stain received by this kind of sale and purchase. At the end of his servitude, the contracted person enjoys all the rights of a free citizen. With his freedom, he receives from the master whom he has served, either implements for husbandry, or utensils proper for his work.

But with whatever appearance of justice this species of traffic may be coloured, the greatest part of the strangers who go over to America under these conditions, would never go on-board a ship, if they were not invieged away. Some artful kidnappers from the sens of Holland spread themselves over the Palatinate, Suabia, and the cantons of Germany, which are the best peopled, or the least happy. There they set forth with raptures, the delights of the New World, and the fortunes easily acquired in that country. Simple men, seduced by these magnificent promises, blindly follow these inhuman brokers, engaged in this scandalous commerce, who deliver them over to factors at Amsterdam or Rotterdam. These, who are in the pay of companies who have undertaken to stock the colonies with inhabitants, give a gratuity to the men employed in this service. Whole families are sold, without their knowledge, to masters at a distance, who impose the harder

conditions upon them, as hunger and necessity do not permit the sufferers to give a refusal. America acquires its supplies of men for husbandry, as princes do for war, by the same artifices; but with a less honest, and perhaps a more inhuman, design; for who knows the number of those who die, or who survive their expectations? The deception is perpetually carried on in Europe, by carefully suppressing all correspondence with America, which might unveil a mystery of imposture and iniquity, too well disguised by the interested principles which gave rise to it.

But, in a word, there would not be so many dupes, if there were fewer victims. It is the oppression of government which makes these chimerical ideas of fortune be adopted by the credulity of the people. Men unfortunate in their private affairs, vagabonds, or contemptible at home, have nothing else to fear, in a foreign climate, and easily pursue the prospect of a better lot. The means made use of to retain them in a country where chance has given them birth, are only calculated to excite in them a desire to quit it. It is vainly supposed that they are to be confined by prohibitions, menaces, and punishments: these do but exasperate them, and drive them to desertion by the very forbidding of it. They should be attached by milder means, and by future expectations; whereas they are imprisoned and bound: man, born free, is restrained from attempting to exist in regions where heaven and earth offer him an asylum. It has been thought better to stifle him in his cradle, than to let him seek for his subsistence in some favourable climate. It is not judged proper even to leave him the choice of his burial-place.—Tyrants in policy! these are the effects of your laws! People, where then are your rights?

Is it then become necessary to lay open to the nations the schemes that are formed against their liberty? Must they be told, that by a conspiracy of the most odious nature, certain powers have lately entered into an agreement, which must deprive even despair itself of every resource? For these two centuries past, all the princes of Europe have been fabricating, in the secret recesses of the cabinet, that long and heavy chain with which the people are encompassed on every side. At every negotiation

fresh links were added to the chain so artificially contrived. Wars tended not to make states more extensive, but subjects more submissive, by gradually substituting military government to the mild and gentle influence of laws and morality. The several sovereigns have all equally strengthened themselves in their tyranny by their conquests or by their losses. When they were victorious they reigned by their armies; when humbled by defeat, they held the command by the misery of their pusillanimous subjects; if they were either competitors or adversaries from motives of ambition, they entered into league or alliance, only to aggravate the servitude of their people. Whether they meant to excite war or to preserve peace, they were certain of turning to the advantage of their authority, either the aggrandisement or the humiliation of their people. If they ceded a province, they exhausted every other, that they might either recover it or indemnify themselves for the loss. If they acquired a new one, the haughtiness they affected out of it was the occasion of cruelty and extortion within. They borrowed one of another, by turns, every art and invention, whether of peace or of war, that might concur sometimes to foment natural antipathy and rivalry, sometimes to obliterate the character of the nations; as if there had been a tacit agreement among the rulers to subject the nations, one by means of another, to the despotism they had constantly been preparing for them. Ye people, who all groan more or less secretly, be not blinded with respect to your condition; those who never entertained any affection for you, are come now not to have any fear for you. In the extremity of wretchedness one single resource remained for you; that of escape and emigration.—Even that has been shut against you.

Princes have agreed among themselves to restore to one another deserters, who, for the most part, inflisted by compulsion or by fraud, have a right to escape; not only villains, who, in reality, ought not to find a refuge anywhere; but indifferently all their subjects, whatever may be the motive that obliged them to quit their country.

Thus all ye unhappy labourers, who find neither subsistence nor work in your own countries, after they have been ravaged and rendered barren by the exactions of fi-

nance ; thus ye die where ye had the misfortune to be born ; ye have no refuge but in the grave. All ye artists and workmen of every species, harassed by monopolies, who are refused the right of working at your own free disposal, unless you have purchased the privileges of your calling : ye who are kept for your whole life in the workshop, for the purpose of enriching a privileged factor : ye whom a court mourning leaves for months together without bread or wages ! never expect to live out of a country where soldiers and guards keep you imprisoned ; go, wander in despair, and die of regret. If you venture to complain, your cries will be re-echoed and lost in the depth of a dungeon ; if ye make your escape, ye will be pursued even beyond mountains and rivers : ye will be sent back, or given up, bound hand and foot, to torture, and to that eternal restraint, to which you have been condemned from your birth. Do you likewise, whom nature has endowed with a free spirit, independent of prejudice and error, who dare to think and talk like men, do you erase from your minds every idea of truth, nature, and humanity ! Applaud every encroachment made on your country and your fellow-citizens, or else maintain a profound silence in the recesses of obscurity and concealment. All ye who were born in those barbarous states, where the condition for the mutual restoration of deserters has been entered into by the several princes, and sealed by a treaty ; recollect the inscription Dante has engraven on the gate of his infernal region : “ *Voi ch' entrate, lasciate omai ogni speranza.* ” “ You who enter here, leave behind you every hope.”

What ! is there then no asylum remaining beyond the seas ? Will not England open her colonies to those wretches who voluntarily prefer her dominion to the insupportable yoke of their own country ? What occasion has she for that infamous band of contracted slaves, seduced and debauched by the shameful means employed by every state to increase their armies ? What need has she of those beings still more miserable, of whom she composes another class of her inhabitants ?

Yes, by an antiquity, the more shocking as it is apparently the less necessary, the northern provinces have had recourse to the traffic and slavery of the negroes. It

will not be disowned, that they may be better fed, better clothed, less ill-treated, and less over-burthened with toil, than in the islands. The laws protect them more effectually, and they seldom become the victims of the barbarity or caprice of an odious tyrant. But still, what must be the burthen of a man's life who is condemned to languish in eternal slavery? Some humane sectaries, christians who look for virtues in the gospel, more than for opinions, have often been desirous of restoring to their slaves that liberty for which they cannot receive any adequate compensation; but they have been a long time withheld by a law, which directed that an assignment of a sufficiency for subsistence should be made to those who were set at liberty.

Let us rather say, they have been prevented from doing this by the convenient custom of being waited on by slaves; by the fondness they have for power, which they attempt to justify by pretending to alleviate their servitude; and by the opinion so readily entertained that the slaves do not complain of a state, which is by time changed into nature: these are the sophisms of self-love, calculated to appease the clamours of conscience. The generality of mankind are not born with evil dispositions, or prone to do ill by choice; but even among those whom nature seems to have formed just and good, there are but few, who possess a soul sufficiently disinterested, courageous, and great, to do any good action, if they must sacrifice some advantage for it.

But still the quakers have lately set an example which ought to make an epocha in the history of religion and humanity. In one of their assemblies, where every one of the faithful, who conceives himself moved by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, has a right of speaking, one of the brethren, who was himself undoubtedly inspired on this occasion, arose and said: "How long then shall we have two consciences, two measures, two scales! one in our own favour, one for the ruin of our neighbour, both equally false? Is it for us, brethren, to complain at this moment, that the parliament of England wishes to enslave us, and to impose upon us the yoke of subjects, without leaving us the rights of citizens; while for this century past, we have been calm-

“ ly acting the part of tyrants, by keeping in bonds of
“ the hardest slavery men who are our equals and our brethren? What have those unhappy men done to us,
“ whom nature hath separated from us by barriers so formidable, whom our avarice has sought after through
“ storms and wrecks, and brought away from the midst
“ of their burning sands, or from their dark forests inhabited by tigers? What crime have they been guilty
“ of, that they should be torn from a country which fed
“ them without toil, and that they should be transplanted by us to a land where they perish under the labours
“ of servitude? Father of heaven, what family hast thou
“ then created, in which the elder born, after having
“ seized on the property of their brethren, are still resolved to compel them with stripes, to manure with
“ the blood of their veins and the sweat of their brow
“ that very inheritance of which they have been robbed?
“ Deplorable race, whom we render brutes to tyrannize
“ over them; in whom we extinguish every power of the
“ soul, to load their limbs and their bodies with burthens;
“ in whom we efface the image of God and the stamp of
“ manhood. A race mutilated and dishonoured as to the
“ faculties of mind and body, throughout its existence,
“ by us who are christians and Englishmen! Englishmen,
“ ye people favoured by Heaven, and respected on the
“ seas, would ye be free and tyrants at the same instant?
“ No, brethren! it is time we should be consistent with
“ ourselves. Let us set free those miserable victims of
“ our pride: let us restore the negroes to that liberty
“ which man should never take from man. May all
“ christian societies be induced, by our example, to repair an injustice authorised by the crimes and plunders
“ of two centuries! May men too long degraded, at
“ length raise to heaven their arms freed from chains, and
“ their eyes bathed in tears of gratitude! Alas! these
“ unhappy mortals have hitherto shed no tears but those
“ of despair.”

This discourse awakened remorse, and the small number of slaves who belonged to the quakers were set at liberty. If the fetters of these unfortunate people were not broken by the other colonists of North America, yet Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Virginia, warmly solicit-

ed that this infamous traffic of men should be prohibited. Every colony of this vast continent appeared disposed to follow this example; but they were prevented by an order from the mother country to its delegates, to reject every proposal tending to this humane project. This cruel prohibition would not have been surprising, if it had come from those countries which are as deep sunk in barbarism by the shackles of vice, as they have formerly been by those of ignorance. When a government, both sacerdotal and military, has brought every thing, even the opinions of men, under its yoke; when man, become an impostor, has persuaded the armed multitude that he holds from Heaven the right of oppressing the earth, there is no shadow of liberty left for civilized nations. Why should they not take their revenge on the people of the torrid zone? But I shall never comprehend by what fatality that legislation, which is the most happily planned of any that hath ever existed, hath been capable of preferring the interest of a few of its merchants to the dictates of nature, of reason, and of virtue.

To what degree the population of North America hath arisen.

THE population of North America consists of four hundred thousand negroes, and of two millions five or six hundred thousand white people, if the calculations of congress be not exaggerated. The number of citizens doubles every fifteen or sixteen years in some of those provinces, and every eighteen or twenty years in others. So rapid an increase must have two sources; the first is, that a number of Irishmen, Jews, Frenchmen, Switzers, Palatines, Moravians, and Saltzburghers, after having been worn out with the political and religious troubles they had experienced in Europe, have gone in search of peace and quietness in these distant climates. The second source of that amazing increase arises from the climate itself of the colonies, where experience has shewn that the people naturally doubled their numbers every five-and-twenty years. The observations of Mr. Franklin will make these truths evident.

The numbers of the people, says that philosopher, increase everywhere in proportion to the number of mar-

riages; and that number increases as the means of subsisting a family are rendered more easy. In a country where the means of subsistence abound, more people marry early. In a society, whose prosperity is a mark of its antiquity, the rich, alarmed at the expences which female luxury brings along with it, engage as late as possible in a state, which is difficult to enter into, and expensive to maintain; and the persons who have no fortunes pass their days in a celibacy which disturbs the married state. The masters have but few children, the servants have none at all, and the artisans are afraid of having any. This circumstance is so evident, especially in great towns, that the population in them is not kept up to its usual standard, and that we constantly find there a greater number of deaths than births. Happily for us this decrease has not yet penetrated into the country, where the constant practice of making up the deficiency of the towns give a little more scope for population. But the lands being everywhere occupied, and let at the highest rate, those who cannot acquire property of their own, are hired by those who are in possession of it. Competition, which arises from the multitude of workmen, lowers the price of labour, and the smallness of profit takes away the desire and the hope of, as well as the abilities requisite for, increase by marriage. Such is the present state of Europe.

That of America presents an appearance of a quite contrary nature. Tracts of land, waste and uncultivated, are either given away, or may be obtained for so moderate a price, that a man of the least turn for labour is furnished in a short time with an extent, which, while it is sufficient to rear a numerous family, will maintain his posterity for a considerable time. The inhabitants, therefore, of the New World, marry in greater numbers, and at an earlier time of life, than the inhabitants of Europe. Where one hundred enter into the married state in Europe, there are two hundred in America; and if we reckon four children to each marriage in our climates, we should allow at least eight in the New Hemisphere. If we multiply these families by their produce, it will appear, that in less than two centuries, North America will arrive at an immense degree of population, unless its natural progress should be impeded by obstacles which it is not possible to foresee.

Manners prevailing at present in North America.

It is now peopled with healthy and robust men, of a stature above the common size. These Creoles come to their full growth sooner than the Europeans, but do not live so long. The inhabitants are supplied with great plenty of every thing requisite for food, by the low price of meat, fish, grain, game, fruits, cyder, and vegetables. Clothing is not so easily procured, that being still very dear, whether it be brought from Europe or made in the country. Manners are in the state they should be among young colonies, and people given to cultivation, who are not yet polished nor corrupted by residing in great cities. Throughout the families in general, there reigns economy, neatness, and regularity. Gallantry and gaming, the passions of indolent opulence, seldom interrupt that happy tranquillity. The female sex are still what they should be, gentle, modest, compassionate, and useful; they are in possession of those virtues which perpetuate the empire of their charms. The men are engaged in their first occupations, the care and improvement of their plantations, which will be the support of their posterity. One general sentiment of benevolence unites every family. Nothing contributes to this union so much as a certain equality of station, a security that arises from property, hope, and a general facility of increasing it; in a word, nothing contributes to it so much as the reciprocal independence in which all men live, with respect to their wants, joined to the necessity of social connections for the purposes of their pleasures. Instead of luxury, which brings misery in its train, instead of this afflicting and shocking contrast, an universal ease, wisely dealt out in the original distribution of the lands, has, by the influence of industry, given rise in every breast to the mutual desire of pleasing; a desire, without doubt, more satisfactory than the secret disposition to injure our brethren, which is inseparable from an extreme inequality of fortune and condition. Men never meet without satisfaction when they are neither in that state of mutual distance which yields to indifference, nor in that way of rivalry which borders on hatred. They come nearer together and unite in societies; in short, it is in the colonies that men lead such a rural life as was the original

destination of mankind, best suited to the health and increase of the species : probably they enjoy all the happiness consistent with the frailty of human nature. We do not, indeed, find there those graces, those talents, those refined enjoyments, the means and expence of which wear out and fatigue the springs of the soul, and bring on the vapours of melancholy, which so naturally follow the disgust arising from sensual enjoyment ; but there are the pleasures of domestic life, the mutual attachments of parents and children, and conjugal love, that passion so pure and so delicious to the soul that can taste it, and despise all other gratifications. This is the enchanting prospect exhibited throughout North America. It is in the wilds of Florida and Virginia, even in the forests of Canada, that men are enabled to continue to love, during their whole life, what was the object of their first affection, that innocence and virtue, which never entirely lose their beauty.

If there be any circumstance wanting to the happiness of British America, it is that of forming one entire nation. Families are there found sometimes re-united, sometimes dispersed, originating from all the different countries of Europe. These colonists, in whatever spot chance or discernment may have placed them, all preserve, with a prejudice not to be worn out, their mother tongue, the partialities and the customs of their own country. Separate schools and churches hinder them from mixing with the hospitable people who afforded them a place of refuge. Still more estranged from this people by worship, by manners, and probably by their feelings, they harbour seeds of dissension that may one day prove the ruin and total overthrow of the colonies. The only preservative against this disaster depends entirely on the conduct of the governments they belong to.

By governments must not be understood those strange constitutions of Europe, which are an absurd mixture of sacred and profane laws. English America was wise or happy enough not to admit any ecclesiastical power : being from the beginning inhabited by presbyterians, she rejected with horror every

Nature of the governments established in North America.

thing that might revive the idea of it. All affairs which in the other parts of the globe are determined by the ecclesiastical courts, are here brought before the civil magistrate, or the national assemblies. The attempts made by the members of the English church to establish their hierarchy in that country, have ever been abortive, notwithstanding the support given them by the mother country: but still they are equally concerned in the administration as well as those of other sects. None but catholics have been excluded, on account of their refusing those oaths which the public tranquillity seemed to require. In this view American government has deserved the greatest commendation; but in other respects it is not so well regulated.

Policy, in its aim and principal object, resembles the education of children. They both tend to form men, and should be in several respects similar to each other. Savage people, first united in society, require, as much as children, to be sometimes led on by gentle means, and sometimes restrained by compulsion. For want of experience, which alone forms our reason, as these savages are incapable of governing themselves in the several changes of things and the various concerns that belong to a rising society, the government that conducts them should itself be enlightened, and guide them by authority to years of maturity. Thus it is that barbarous nations are naturally subject to the oppressive yoke of despotic power, till in the advanced state of society their interests teach them to connect themselves.

Civilized nations, like young men, more or less advanced, not in proportion to their abilities, but from the conduct of their early education, as soon as they become sensible of their own strength and right, require to be managed, and even attended to by their governors. A son well educated should engage in no undertaking without consulting his father: a prince, on the contrary, should make no regulations without consulting his people: further, the son, in resolutions where he follows the advice of his father, frequently hazards nothing but his own happiness: in all that a prince ordains, the happiness of his people is concerned. The opinion of the public, in a nation that thinks and speaks, is the rule of the go-

vernment ; and the prince should never thwart that opinion without public reasons, nor oppose it without having first convinced the people of their error. Government is to model all its forms according to public opinion : this, it is well known, varies with manners, habits, and information. So that one prince may, without finding the least resistance, do an act of authority, not to be revived by his successor, without exciting the public indignation. From whence does this difference arise ? The first cannot have thwarted an opinion that was not sprung up in his time, but the latter may have openly counteracted it a century after. The first, if I may be allowed the expression, may, without the knowledge of the public, have taken a step, the violence of which he may have softened or made amends for by the happy success of his government ; the other shall, perhaps, have increased the public calamities by such unjust acts of wilful authority, as may perpetuate its first abuses. Public remonstrance is generally the result of opinion ; and the general opinion is the rule of government : and because the public opinion governs mankind, kings, for this reason, become the rulers of men. Governments then, as well as opinions, ought to improve and advance to perfection. But what is the rule for opinions among an enlightened people ? It is the permanent interest of society, the safety and advantage of the nation. This interest is modified by the turn of events and situations ; public opinion and the form of the government follow these several modifications. This is the source of all the forms of government established by the English, who are rational and free, throughout North America.

The government of Nova Scotia, of one of the provinces in New England, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, the two Carolinas, and Georgia, is styled royal, because the king of England is there invested with the supreme authority. Representatives of the people form a house of commons, as in the mother country : a select council, approved by the king, intended to support the prerogatives of the crown, represents the house of peers, and maintains that representation by the fortune and rank of the most distinguished persons in the country, who are

members of it. A governor convenes, prorogues, and dissolves, their assemblies; gives or refuses assent to their deliberations, which receive from his approbation the force of law, till the king, to whom they are transmitted, has rejected them.

The second kind of government which takes place in the colonies, is known by the name of proprietary government. When the English first settled on those distant regions, a rapacious and active court-favourite easily obtained in those wastes, which were as large as kingdoms, a property and authority without bounds. A bow and a few skins, the only homage exacted by the crown, purchased for a man in power the right of sovereignty, or of governing at pleasure in an unknown country: such was the origin of government in the greater part of the colonies. At present, Maryland and Pennsylvania are the only provinces under this singular form of government, or rather this singular foundation of sovereignty. Maryland, indeed, differs from the rest of the provinces only by receiving its governor from the family of Baltimore, whose nomination is to be approved by the king. In Pennsylvania, the governor named by the proprietary family, and confirmed by the crown, is not supported by a council, which gives a kind of superiority, and he is obliged to agree with the commons, in whom is naturally vested all authority.

A third form, styled by the English charter, government, seems more calculated to produce harmony in the constitution. At present this subsists only in Connecticut and Rhode island; but it was formerly extended to all the provinces in New England. It may be considered as a mere democracy. The inhabitants of themselves elect and depose all their officers, and make whatever laws they think proper, without being obliged to have the assent of the king, or his having any right to annul them.

At length the conquest of Canada, joined to the acquisition of Florida, has given rise to a form of legislation hitherto unknown throughout the realm of Great Britain. Those provinces have been put or left under the yoke of military, and consequently absolute, authority. Without any right to assemble in a national body, they

receive immediately from the court of London every order of government.

This diversity of governments is not the work of the mother country. We do not find in it the traces of a reasonable, uniform, and regular, legislation. It is chance, climate, the prejudices of the times, and of the founders of the colonies, that have produced this motley variety of constitutions. It is not the province of men, who are cast by chance upon a desert coast, to constitute legislation.

All legislation, in its nature, should aim at the happiness of society. The means by which it is to attain this great end, depend entirely on its natural qualities. Climate, that is to say, the sky and the soil, are the first rule for the legislator. His resources dictate to him his duties. In the first instance, the local position should be consulted. A number of people thrown on a maritime coast, will have laws more or less relative to agriculture or navigation, in proportion to the influence the sea or land may have on the subsistence of the inhabitants who are to people that desert coast. If the new colony be led by the course of some large river far within land, a legislator ought to have regard to the quality of the soil and the degree of its fertility, as well as to the connections the colony will have either at home or abroad by the traffic of commodities most conducive to its prosperity.

But the wisdom of legislation will chiefly appear in the distribution of property. It is a general rule, which obtains in all countries, that, when a colony is founded, an extent of land be given to every person sufficient for the maintenance of a family : more should be given to those who have abilities to make the necessary advances towards improvement ; and some should be reserved for posterity, or for additional settlers, with which the colony may in time be augmented.

The first object of a rising colony is subsistence and population : the next is the prosperity likely to flow from these two sources. To avoid occasions of war, whether offensive or defensive ; to turn industry towards those objects which are most advantageous ; not to form connections around them, except such as are unavoidable, and may be proportioned to the stability which the colony ac-

quires by the numbers of its inhabitants and the nature of its resources ; to introduce, above all things, a partial and local spirit in a nation which is going to be established, a spirit of union within, and of peace without ; to refer every institution to a distant but fixed point ; and to make every occasional law subservient to the settled regulation which alone is to effect an increase of numbers, and to give stability to the settlement: these circumstances make no more than a sketch of a legislation.

The moral system is to be formed on the nature of the climate ; a large field for population is at first to be laid open by facilitating marriage, which depends upon the facility of procuring subsistence. Sanctity of manners should be established by opinion. In a barbarous island, which is to be stocked with children, no more would be necessary than to leave the principles of truth to unfold themselves with the natural progress of reason. By proper precautions against those idle fears which proceed from ignorance, the errors of superstition should be removed, till that period when the warmth of the natural passions, fortunately uniting with the rational powers, dissipates every phantom. But when people already advanced in life are to be established in a new country, the ability of legislation consists in removing every injurious opinion or habit which may be cured or corrected. If we wish that these should not be transmitted to posterity, we should attend to the second generation, by instituting a general and public education of the children. A prince or legislator should never found a colony, without previously sending thither some proper persons for the education of youth : that is, some governors rather than teachers : for it is of less moment to teach them what is good, than to guard them from evil. Good education is ineffectual, when the people are already corrupted. The seeds of morality and virtue, sown in the infant state of a generation already vitiated, are annihilated in the early stages of manhood by debauchery, and the contagion of such vices as have already become habitual in society. The best educated young men cannot come into the world without making engagements and forming connections, which will wholly influence them during the remainder of their lives. If they marry, follow any profession or pur-

suit, they find the seeds of evil and corruption rooted in every condition ; a conduct entirely opposite to their principles ; example and discourse which disconcerts and combats their best resolutions.

But in a rising colony, the influence of the first generation may be corrected by the manners of the succeeding one. The minds of all are prepared for virtue by labour. The necessities of life remove all vices proceeding from want of employment. The overflowing of its population hath a natural tendency towards the mother country, where luxury continually invites and seduces the rich and voluptuous planter. A legislator, who intends to refine the constitution and manners of a colony, will meet with every assistance he can require. If he be only possessed of abilities and virtue, the lands and the people he has to manage will suggest to his mind a plan of society, that a writer can only mark out in a vague manner, liable to all the uncertainty of hypotheses that are varied and complicated by an infinity of circumstances too difficult to be foreseen and combined.

But the chief basis of a society for cultivation and commerce, is property. It is the seed of good and evil, natural or moral, consequent on the social state. Every nation seems to be divided into two irreconcilable parties. The rich and the poor, the men of property and the hirelings, that is to say, masters and slaves, form two classes of citizens, unfortunately in opposition to one another. In vain have some modern authors wished by sophistry to establish a treaty of peace between these two states. The rich on all occasions are disposed to obtain a great deal from the poor at little expence, and the poor are ever inclined to set too high a value on their labour ; while the rich man must always give the law in this too unequal bargain. Hence arises the system of counterpoise established in so many countries. The people have not wished to attack property which they considered as sacred, but they have made attempts to fetter it, and to check its natural tendency to universal power. These counterpoises have almost always been ill applied, as they were but a feeble remedy against the original evil in society. It is then to the repartition of lands that a legislator will turn his principal attention. The more

wisely that distribution shall be managed, the more simple, uniform, and exact, will be those laws of the country which chiefly conduce to the preservation of property.

The English colonies partake, in this respect, of the radical vice inherent in the ancient constitution of the mother country. As its present government is but a reformation of that feudal system which had oppressed all Europe, it still retains many usages, which being originally nothing more than abuses of servitude, are still more sensibly felt by their contrast with the liberty which the people have recovered. It has, therefore, been found necessary to join the laws which left many rights to the nobility, to those which modify, lessen, abrogate, or soften, the feudal rights. Hence so many laws of exception for one original law; so many of interpretation for one fundamental; so many new laws that are at variance with the old. Hence it is agreed, there is not in the whole world a code so diffuse, so perplexed, as that of the civil law of Great Britain. The wisest men of that enlightened nation have often exclaimed against this disorder. They have either not been heard, or the changes which have been produced by their remonstrances have only served to increase the confusion.

By their dependence and their ignorance, the colonies have blindly adopted that deformed and ill-digested code, the burthen of which oppressed their ancestors: they have added to that obscure heap of materials by every new law that the times, manners, and place, could introduce. From this mixture has resulted a chaos the most difficult to put in order; a collection of contradictions that requires much pains to reconcile. Immediately there sprang up a numerous body of lawyers, to prey upon the lands and inhabitants of those new settled climates. The fortune and influence they have acquired in a short time, have brought into subjection to their rapaciousness the valuable class of citizens employed in agriculture, commerce, in all the arts and labours most indispensably necessary for every society, but almost singularly essential to a rising community. To the severe evil of chicane, which has fixed itself on the branches, in order to seize on the fruit, has exceeded that of finance, which destroys the heart and the root of the tree.

IN the origin of the colonies, the coin bore the same value as in the mother country. The scarcity of it soon occasioned a rise of one third. That inconvenience was not remedied by the abundance of specie which came from the Spanish colonies ; because it was necessary to transmit that into England in order to pay for the merchandize wanted from thence. This was a gulf that absorbed the circulation in the colonies. It was, however, necessary to establish a mode of exchange ; and every province, except Virginia, sought for it in the creation of a paper currency.

The coin that has been current in the English colonies in North America.

The general government made at first but a moderate use of this expedient ; but the disputes of the savages increasing, as well as the wars against Canada, occasioned men of an enterprising spirit to form complicated and extensive projects ; and the management of the public treasury was intrusted to rapacious or unskilful hands. This resource was then more freely employed than was proper. In vain were taxes levied at first, in order to pay the interest of the paper, and to take up the paper itself at a stipulated period. New debts were contracted to satisfy fresh wants, and engagements were generally carried beyond all excess. In Pennsylvania alone, the paper currency of the state preserved unremittingly its entire value. The credit of it was shaken in two or three other colonies, though it was not entirely lost. But in the two Carolinas, and in the four provinces which constitute what is commonly called New England, it fell into such discredit from the multiplicity of it, that it could no longer be circulated at any rate. Massachusetts bay, which had conquered Cape Breton from the French, received from the mother country 4,050,000 livres [168,750*l.*] of indemnification. With this sum they paid off twelve times the value in their paper, and those who received the money thought they had made a very good bargain. The parliament, aware of this mischief, made some attempts to remedy it ; but their measures were only very imperfectly successful. It would certainly have been a more effectual step, than any of those which had been invented by either a good or bad policy, to have broken the fet-

ters with which the internal industry, and the external commerce, of so many great settlements were shackled.

Regulations to which the internal industry and the external trade of North America had been subjected.

THE first colonists who peopled North America applied themselves solely to agriculture. They soon perceived that their exports did not enable them to buy what they wanted, and they therefore found themselves in a manner compelled to set up some rude manufactures. The interests of the mother country seemed to be affected by this innovation; which was made a matter of parliamentary inquiry, and discussed with all the attention it deserved. There were men bold enough to defend the cause of the colonists. They urged, that as the business of tillage did not employ men all the year, it was tyranny to oblige them to waste in idleness the time which the land did not require; that as the produce of agriculture and hunting did not furnish them to the extent of their wants, the preventing them from providing against them by a new species of industry, was in fact reducing them to the greatest distress: in a word, that the prohibition of manufactures only tended to enhance the price of all provisions in a rising state, to lessen, or perhaps stop, the sale of them, and to deter such persons as might intend to settle in it.

The evidence of these principles was not to be controverted: they were complied with after great debates. The Americans were permitted to manufacture their own clothes themselves, but with such restrictions as betrayed how much avarice regretted, what an appearance of justice could not but allow. All communication from one province to another on this account was severely prohibited. They were forbidden, under the heaviest penalties, to traffic with each other for wool of any sort, raw or manufactured. However, some manufacturers of hats ventured to break through these restrictions. To put a stop to what was termed a heinous disorderly practice, the parliament had recourse to the mean and cruel expedient of law. A workman was not at liberty to set up for himself till after seven years apprenticeship; a master was

not allowed to have more than two apprentices at a time, nor to employ any slave in his work-shop.

Iron mines, which seem to put into men's hands the instruments of their own independence, were laid under restrictions still more severe. It was not allowed to carry iron in bars, or rough pieces, anywhere but to the mother country. Without being provided with crucibles to melt it, or machines to bend it, without hammers or anvils to fashion it, they had still less liberty of converting it into steel.

Importation was subjected to still further restraints. All foreign vessels, unless in evident distress or danger of wreck, or freighted with gold or silver, were not to come into any of the ports of North America. Even English vessels were not admitted there, unless they came immediately from some port of the country. The ships of the colonies going to Europe, were to bring back no merchandize but from the mother country. Every thing was included in this proscription, except wine from the Madeiras, the Azores, and the Canaries, and salt for the fisheries.

All exportations were originally to terminate in England; but important reasons determined the government to relax and abate this extreme severity. The colonists were allowed to carry directly south of Cape Finisterre, grain, meal, rice, vegetables, fruit, salt fish, planks, and timber. All other productions were reserved for the mother country. Even Ireland, which afforded an advantageous mart for corn, flax, and pipe staves, has been shut against them by an act of parliament.

The parliament, which represents the nation, assumed the right of directing commerce in its whole extent throughout the British dominions. It is by this authority it pretends to regulate the connections between the mother country and the colonies, to maintain a communication, an advantageous reciprocal re-action, between the scattered parts of an immense empire. There should, in fact, be one power to appeal to, in order to determine finally upon the concerns that may be useful or prejudicial to the general good of the whole society. The parliament is the only body that can assume such an important power. But it ought to employ it to the advantage of every mem-

ber of society. This is an inviolable maxim, especially in a state where all the powers are formed and directed for the preservation of national liberty.

That principle of impartiality was unattended to, which alone can maintain an equal state of independence among the several members of a free government ; when the colonies were obliged to vent in the mother country all their productions, even those which were not for their own consumption ; when they were obliged to take from the mother country all kinds of merchandize, even those which came from foreign nations. This imperious and useless restraint, loading the sales and purchases of the Americans with unnecessary and ruinous charges, has necessarily lessened their industry, and consequently diminished their profits ; and it has been only for the purpose of enriching a few merchants, or some factors at home, that the rights and interests of the colonies have thus been sacrificed. All they owed to England for the protection they received from her, was only a preference in the sale and importation of all such of their commodities as she should consume ; and a preference in the purchase and in the exportation of all such merchandize as came from her hands : so far all submission was a return of gratitude : beyond it all obligation was violence.

Thus it is that tyranny has given birth to contraband trade. Transgression is the first effect produced by unreasonable laws. In vain has it frequently been repeated to the colonies, that smuggling was contrary to the fundamental interests of their settlements, to all reason of government, and to the express intentions of law. In vain has it been continually laid down in public writings, that the subject who pays duty is oppressed by him who does not pay it ; and that the fraudulent merchant robs the fair trader by disappointing him of his lawful profit. In vain have precautions been multiplied for preventing such frauds, and fresh penalties inflicted for the punishment of them. The voice of interest, reason, and equity, has prevailed over all the numberless clamours and various attempts of finance. Foreign importations smuggled into North America, amount to one third of those which pay duty.

An indefinite liberty, or merely restrained within pro-

per limits, would have put a stop to the prohibited engagements of which so much complaint had been made. Then the colonies would have arrived to a state of affluence, which would have enabled them to discharge a load of debt due to the mother country, amounting to one hundred and twenty, or one hundred and thirty, millions of livres [from 5,000,000l. to 5,416,666l. 13s. 4d.] They would then have drawn from thence annually goods to the amount of forty-five millions of livres [1,875,000l.] the sum to which their wants had been raised in the most successful periods. But instead of having their destiny alleviated, as they were incessantly demanding, these great settlements saw themselves threatened with a tax.

ENGLAND had just emerged from a *Distressed state* long and bloody war, during which her *of England in* fleets had been victorious in all the seas, 1763. and her conquests had enlarged her dominions, already too extensive, with an immense acquisition of territory in the East and West Indies. This splendour might perhaps externally dazzle the nations; but the country was continually obliged to lament its acquisitions and its triumphs. Oppressed with a load of debt to the amount of 3,330,000,000 of livres [138,750,000l.] that cost her an interest of 111,577,490 livres [4,649,062l. 1s. 8d.] a-year, she was scarce able to support the necessary expences of the state, with a revenue of 130,000,000 of livres [5,416,666l. 13s. 4d.]; and that revenue was so far from increasing, that it was not even certain it would continue.

The lands were charged with a heavier tax than had ever been imposed in time of peace. New duties were laid on houses and windows; and the controul of the acts was oppressive on all kinds of property. Wine, plate, cards, dice, and every thing which was considered as an object of luxury or amusement, paid more than it could have been thought possible. To compensate for the sacrifice which had been made for the preservation of the citizens, by prohibiting spiritous liquors, duties were laid on the ordinary drink of the common people, on malt, cyder, and beer. The ports dispatched nothing for foreign kingdoms, and received no-

thing from them, but what was loaded with duties, both of export and import. Materials and workmanship had so prodigiously risen in price in Great Britain, that her merchants were supplanted even in the countries where they had not till then met with any competitors. The commercial profits of England with every part of the world, did not amount annually to more than 56,000,000 livres [2,333,333l. 6s. 8d.]; but of this balance 35,000,000 livres [1,458,333l. 6s. 8d.] were to be deducted, to pay the arrears of the sums which foreigners had placed in the public funds.

The springs of the state were all strained. The muscles of the body politic being in a state of extreme tension, were in some measure thrown out of their place. The crisis was a violent one. The people should have been allowed time to recover. They could not be eased by a diminution of expences; for those made by government were necessary, either for the purpose of improving the conquests, purchased at the price of so much blood and treasure, or to restrain the resentment of the house of Bourbon, irritated by the humiliations of the late war, and the sacrifices of the late peace. As other means did not occur, which might secure the present as well as future prosperity of the nation, it was thought proper to call in the colonies to the aid of the mother country. These views were prudent and just.

England calls its colonies to its assistance.

THE members of a confederate body must all of them contribute to its defence and its splendour, in proportion to their respective abilities; as it is only by public strength that each class is enabled to preserve the entire and peaceful enjoyments of its possessions. The poor are certainly less interested in this than the wealthy; but yet their tranquillity is concerned in it, in the first place, and in the second place, the national riches, which they are called upon to share by their industry. There can be no social principle more evident, and yet the infringement of it is the most ordinary of all political faults. From whence can arise this perpetual contradiction between the conviction and the conduct of government?

It arises from the fault of the legislative power, in ex-

aggraving the means for maintaining the public strength, and in employing for its own caprices part of the funds destined for this purpose. The wealth of the merchant and of the farmer, and the subsistence of the poor, taken from them in the country places and in the towns in the name of the state, and prostituted in the courts to the purposes of interest and vice, are employed to increase the pomp of a number of men, who flatter, detest, and corrupt, their master ; or pass into still baser hands than these, to pay for the scandal and shame of his pleasures. These treasures are lavished for a parade of grandeur, the vain decoration of those who can have no real grandeur ; and for festivals, the resource of idleness, unable to exert itself, in the midst of the cares and labours which the government of an empire would require. A portion of them, it is true, is given to the public wants : but these, from incapacity or inattention, are applied without judgment as without economy. Authority deceived, and disdaining even to endeavour to be otherwise, admits of an unjust distribution of the tax, and of a mode of collecting it which is itself an additional oppression. Then every patriotic sentiment becomes extinct. A war is excited between the prince and his subjects. Those who levy the revenues of the state, appear nothing but the enemies of the citizen. He defends his fortune from the impost, as he would defend it from encroachment. Every thing which cunning can take from power appears a lawful gain ; and the subjects, corrupted by the government, make use of the reprisals against a master who plunders them. They do not perceive that, in this unequal conflict, they are themselves both dupes and victims. The insatiable and eager treasury, less satisfied with what is given to them than irritated for what is refused, persecutes every individual delinquent by a variety of means. They join activity to interest ; and vexations are multiplied. They go under the denomination of punishment and justice ; and the monster, who reduces to poverty all those whom he prosecutes, returns thanks to Heaven for the number of culprits whom he punishes, and for the multiplicity of offences by which he enriches himself. Happy is the sovereign who, to prevent so many abuses, would not disdain to give his people an exact account of the manner

in which all the sums he had required of them were employed. But this sovereign hath not yet appeared; nor indeed will he ever appear. Nevertheless, the debt due by the protected person to the state which protects him, is equally necessary and sacred; and has been acknowledged by all people. The English colonies of North America had not disavowed this obligation; and the British ministry had never applied to them without obtaining the assistance they solicited.

But these were gifts and not taxes, since the grant was preceded by free and public deliberations in the assemblies of each settlement. The mother country had been engaged in expensive and cruel wars. Tumultuous and enterprising parliaments had disturbed its tranquillity. It had a set of bold and corrupt ministers, unfortunately inclined to raise the authority of the throne on the ruin of all the powers and all the rights of the people. Revolutions had succeeded each other, while the idea had never suggested itself, of attacking a custom, confirmed by two centuries of fortunate experience.

The provinces of the New World were accustomed to consider as a right this mode of furnishing their contingent in men and money. Whether this claim had been doubtful or erroneous, prudence would have required that it should not have been too openly attacked. The art of maintaining authority is a delicate one, which requires more circumspection than is generally thought. Those who govern are perhaps too much accustomed to despise men. They consider them as slaves, bowed down by nature, whereas they are only so by habit. If they be oppressed with a fresh weight, take care lest they should rise up again with fury. Let it not be forgotten, that the lever of power hath no other support but that of opinion; and that the strength of those who govern is really nothing more than the strength of those who suffer themselves to be governed. Let not the people, who are diverted by their employments, or who sleep in their chains, be instructed to pry into truths which are too formidable for government; and when they obey, let them not be made to recollect that they have the right to command. As soon as the instant of this terrible alarm shall arrive; as soon as they shall think that they are not made for

their chiefs, but that their chiefs are made for them ; as soon as they shall have been able to collect together, and to hear each other unanimously exclaim, “ we will not have “ this law, the custom is displeasing to us ;” there is then no alternative left, but either to submit or to punish, to be weak or to be tyrants ; and from that time the authority of government being detested or despised, whatever measures they may take, they will have nothing to expect from the people but open insolence or concealed hatred.

The first duty of a prudent administration is, therefore, to respect the prevailing opinions of a country ; for opinions are the kind of property to which the people are more attached than even to that of their fortune. It may, indeed, endeavour to rectify them by knowledge, or alter them by persuasion, if they should be prejudicial to the strength of the state. But it is not allowable to contradict them without necessity ; and there never was any to reject the system adopted by North America.

In fact, whether the several countries of the New World were authorised, as they wished to do, to send representatives to parliament, in order to deliberate with their fellow-citizens on the exigencies of the British empire ; or whether they continued to examine within themselves what contribution it was convenient for them to grant ; the treasury could not have experienced any embarrassment from either of these modes. In the first instance, the remonstrances of their deputies would have been lost in the multitude, and the provinces would have been legally charged with part of the burthen intended for them to bear. In the second, the ministry disposing of the dignities of the employments, of the pensions, and even of the elections, would not have experienced more opposition to their will in the other hemisphere than they do in this.

But the maxims which were holden sacred in America had some other foundation beside prejudice. The people relied upon the nature of their charters ; they relied still more firmly upon the right which every English citizen hath, not to be taxed without his consent, or that of his representatives. This right, which ought to belong to all

people, since it is founded on the eternal code of reason, was traced to its origin as far back as the reign of Edward I. Since that period, the English never lost sight of it. In peace and in war, under the dominion of ferocious kings, as well as under that of weak monarchs, in times of slavery as in periods of anarchy, they never ceased to claim it. The English, under the Tudors, were seen to abandon their most valuable rights, and to deliver up their defenceless heads to the stroke of the tyrant; but they were never seen to renounce the right of taxing themselves. It was in defence of this right that they shed torrents of blood, that they dethroned or punished their kings. Finally, at the revolution of 1688, this right was solemnly acknowledged by the famous act, in which liberty, with the same hand that she was expelling a despotic king, was drawing the conditions of the contract between the nation and the new sovereign they had just chosen. This prerogative of the people, much more sacred, undoubtedly, than so many imaginary rights which superstition hath endeavoured to sanctify in tyrants, was at once in England the instrument and the bulwark of its liberty. The nation thought and perceived that this was the only dike which could for ever put a stop to despotism; that the moment which deprives a people of this privilege condemns them to oppression; and that the funds, raised apparently for their safety, are employed sooner or later to ruin them. The English, when they founded their colonies, had carried these principles beyond the seas, and the same ideas were transmitted to their posterity.

Alas! if in those countries even of Europe, where slavery seems for a long time to have taken up its residence in the midst of vices, of riches, and of the arts; where the despotism of armies maintains the despotism of courts; where man, fettered from his cradle, and bound by the twofold bands of superstition and policy, hath never breathed the air of liberty; if, even in those countries, persons who have reflected once in their lives on the destiny of states, cannot avoid the adopting of these maxims, and envying the fortunate nation which hath contrived to make them the foundation and the basis of its constitution; how much more must the English, the children of America, be

attached to them ; they who have received this intelligence from their ancestors, and who know at what price they have purchased it ? Even the soil they inhabit must keep up in them a sentiment favourable to these ideas. Dispersed over an immense continent, free as nature, which surrounds them, amidst the rocks, the mountains, the vast plains of their deserts, and on the skirts of those forests where every thing is still wild, and where nothing calls to mind neither the servitude nor the tyranny of man, they seem to receive from natural objects lessons of liberty and independence. Besides, these people, who are almost all of them devoted to agriculture, to commerce, and to useful labours, which elevate and strengthen the mind by giving simplicity to the manners, who have been hitherto as far removed from riches as from poverty, cannot yet be corrupted either by an excess of luxury or by a multiplicity of wants. It is this state, more especially, that man who enjoys liberty can maintain it, and can shew himself jealous of defending an hereditary right which seems to be the sure guarantee of all the other rights. Such was the resolution of the Americans.

WHETHER the British ministry were yet unacquainted with these dispositions, or whether they hoped that their delegates would succeed in altering them, they however embraced the opportunity of a glorious peace to exact a forced contribution from the colonies. For let it be well observed, that a war, whether fortunate or unfortunate, serves always as a pretence to the usurpations of government, as if the views of the chiefs of the belligerent powers were less to conquer their enemies than to enslave their subjects. The year 1764 gave birth to the famous stamp act, which forbade the admission into the tribunals of any claim which had not been written upon paper stamped and sold for the benefit of the treasury.

England exacts from her colonies what she ought only to have asked of them.

The English provinces of the North of America were all incensed at this usurpation of their most valuable and most sacred rights. By unanimous consent, they refused to consume what was furnished them by the mother coun-

try, till this illegal and oppressive bill was withdrawn. The women, whose weakness might have been feared, were the most eager in sacrificing what served for their ornament; and the men, animated by this example, gave up on their parts other enjoyments. Many cultivators quit-
ted the plough, in order to accustom themselves to the work of manufactures; and the woollen, linen, and cotton, coarsely wrought, were bought up at the price that was previously given for the finest cloths and most beautiful stuffs.

This kind of combination surprised the government, and their anxiety was increased by the clamours of the merchants, who found no market for their goods. These discontents were supported by the enemies of the ministry; and the stamp act was repealed after two years of a commotion, which in other times would have kindled a civil war.

But the triumph of the colonies was of short duration. The parliament, which had retracted only with extreme reluctance, ordained in 1767, that the revenue which they had not been able to obtain by means of the stamp, should be collected by the glass, the lead, the pasteboard, the colours, the figured paper, and the tea, which were conveyed from England to America. The people of the northern continent were not less incensed with this innovation than with the former. In vain was it represented to them, that no one could contest with Great Britain the power of settling upon her exports such duties as were suitable to her interests; since she did not deprive her establishments beyond the seas of the liberty of manufacturing themselves the commodities which were subjected to the new taxes. This subterfuge appeared a mark of derision to men, who, being merely cultivators, and compelled to have no communication except with the mother country, could neither procure for themselves by their own industry, nor by foreign connections, the articles that were taxed. Whether the tribute were paid in the Old or in the New World, they understood that the name made no alteration in the thing, and that their liberty would be no less attacked in this manner than it had been in the former, which had been repulsed with success. The colo-

nists saw clearly that the government meant to deceive them, and they would not be imposed upon. These political sophisms appeared to them as they really are, the mask of tyranny.

Nations in general are more adapted to feel than to think. Most of them have never thought of analysing the nature of the power which governs them. They obey without reflection, and because they are in the habit of obeying. The origin and object of the first national associations being unknown to them, every resistance to their will appears to them a crime. It is chiefly in those states where the principles of legislation are blended with those of religion, that this error was common. The habit of believing is favourable to the habit of suffering. Man doth not renounce with impunity one single object. It seems as if Nature avenged herself of him who ventures thus to degrade her. This servile disposition of the soul extends to every thing ; it makes a duty of resignation as of meanness, and respecting every chain that binds it, trembles to enter into an examination of the laws as well as of the tenets. In the same manner as one single extravagance in religious opinions is sufficient to induce minds that are once deceived to adopt numberless others, so the first usurpation of government opens the door to all the rest. He who believes the most believes also the least, and he who can exert the most power can exert also the least. It is by this double abuse of credulity and of authority, that all the absurdities in matters of religion and politics have been introduced in the world to crush mankind. Accordingly, the first signal of liberty among the nations hath excited them to shake off these two yokes at once ; and the period in which the human mind began to discuss the abuses of the church and of the clergy is that when reason became at length sensible of the rights of the people, and when courage endeavoured to fix the first limits to despotism. The principles of toleration and of liberty established in the English colonies had made them a people very different from others. There it was known what the dignity of man was ; and when it was violated by the British ministry, it necessarily followed, that a people, composed entirely of citizens, should rise against this attempt.

Three years elapsed, and none of the taxes which had so much offended the Americans were yet levied. This was something, but it was not all that was expected from men jealous of their prerogatives. They wanted a general and formal renunciation of what had been illegally ordained, and this satisfaction was granted to them in 1770. The tea only was excepted. The intent, indeed, of this reserve, was merely to palliate the disgrace of giving up entirely the superiority of the mother country over its colonies; for this duty was not more exacted than the others had been.

England, after having given way, wishes to be obeyed by its colonies. Measures taken to resist its authority.

THE ministry, deceived by their delegates, certainly imagined that the dispositions of the people were altered in the New World, when in 1773 they ordered the tax on the tea to be levied.

At this news the indignation became general throughout North America. In some provinces, thanks were decreed to those navigators who had refused to take any of this article on-board. In others, the merchants to whom it was addressed refused to receive it. In one place, whoever sold it was declared an enemy to his country; in another, the same mark of ignominy was bestowed upon those who should keep it in their warehouses. Several districts solemnly renounced the use of this liquor, and a greater number of them burnt all the tea they had remaining, which had hitherto been in such high estimation among them. The tea sent to this part of the globe was valued at five or six millions of livres [from 208,333l. 6s. 8d. to 250,000l.] and not a single chest of it was landed. Boston was the chief scene of this insurrection. Its inhabitants destroyed in the harbour three cargoes of tea, which had arrived from Europe.

This great city had always appeared more attentive to their rights than the rest of America. The least attempt against their privileges was repulsed without discretion. This resistance, sometimes accompanied with troubles, had for some years past disturbed the government. The ministry, who had some motives of revenge to gratify, too

hastily seized upon the circumstance of this blameable excess, and demanded of the parliament a severe punishment.

Moderate people wished that the guilty city should be condemned to furnish an indemnity proportioned to the damage done in its harbour, and which it deserved for not having punished this act of violence. This penalty was judged too slight; and on the 13th of March 1774, a bill was passed which shut up the port of Boston, and which forbade that any thing should be carried there.

The court of London congratulated itself upon this rigorous law, and doubted not but that it would bring the Bostonians to that spirit of servitude with which it had been hitherto attempted in vain to inspire them. If, contrary to every appearance, these bold men should persevere in their pretensions, their neighbours would eagerly avail themselves of the prohibition thrown upon the principal port of the colonies. At the worst, the other colonies which had been for a long time jealous of that of Massachusetts bay, would abandon it with indifference to its melancholy fate, and would collect the immense trade which these misfortunes would cause to flow in upon them. In this manner the union of the several settlements, which, in the opinion of the mother country, had for some years past acquired too much consistence, would be broken.

The expectations of the ministry were in general frustrated. An act of rigour sometimes strikes awe. The people who have murmured while the storm was only preparing at a distance, submit when it comes to fall upon them. It is then that they weigh the advantages and disadvantages of resistance, that they measure their strength with that of their oppressors: it is then that a panic terror seizes those which have every thing to lose, and nothing to gain; that they raise their voices, that they intimidate, and that they bribe; that division is excited in the minds of men, and that society is divided between two factions which irritate each other, which sometimes take up arms and slay each other in the view of their tyrants, who behold with complacency and satisfaction the effusion of their blood. But tyrants scarcely find any accomplices, unless among people already corrupt. It is vice which gives them confederates among those whom they oppress. It is effeminacy which takes

the alarm, and cannot venture to exchange its tranquillity for honourable dangers. It is the vile ambition of commanding which lends its assistance to despotism, and consents to be a slave for the sake of acquiring dominion, to give up a people in order to divide their spoils, and to renounce the sense of honour in order to obtain honours and titles. It is especially that indifferent and cold personality, the last of the crimes of the people, the last of the vices of governments; for it is government which always gives rise to them; it is government which, from principle, sacrifices a nation to a man, and the happiness of a century and of posterity to the enjoyment of a day and of a moment. All these vices, which are the fruits of an opulent and voluptuous society, of a society grown old and come to its last period, do not belong to recent people engaged in the toils of agriculture. The Americans remained united among themselves. The carrying into execution a bill which they called inhuman, barbarous, and destructive, served only to confirm them in the resolution of supporting their rights with more unanimity and steadiness.

The minds of men grew more and more exalted at Boston. The cry of liberty was reinforced by that of religion. The churches resounded with the most violent exhortations against England. It was undoubtedly an interesting spectacle for philosophy, to see that in the temples and at the feet of the altars, where superstition had so often blessed the chains of the people, where the priests had so often flattered the tyrants, that liberty should raise its voice to defend the privileges of an oppressed nation; and if we believe that the Deity condescends to cast an eye upon the unfortunate contests of mankind, it preferred certainly to see its sanctuary consecrated to this use, and to hear hymns to liberty become part of the worship addressed to it by its ministers. These discourses must have produced a great effect; and when a free people invokes the aid of Heaven against oppression, they soon have recourse to arms.

The other inhabitants of Massachusetts bay disdained even the idea of taking the least advantage of the disasters of the capital. They thought of nothing but tightening the bands which connected them with the Bostonians, and

were inclined to bury themselves under the ruins of their common country, rather than suffer the least encroachment upon rights which they had learned to cherish more than life.

All the provinces attached themselves to the cause of Boston, and their attachment increased in proportion to the calamities and sufferings of that unforunate city. Being almost guilty of the same resistance which had been so severely punished, they were sensible that the vengeance of the mother country against them was only delayed, and that all the grace which the most favoured of them can possibly expect will be to be the last object of its revenge.

These dispositions to a general insurrection were increased by the act against Boston, which was circulated throughout the continent upon paper edged with black, as an emblem of the mourning of liberty. Anxiety soon communicates from one house to another. The citizens assemble and converse in the places. All the presses teem with writings full of eloquence and vigour.

“ The severities of the British parliament against Boston ought to make all the American provinces tremble. They have now only to choose between fire and the sword, between the horrors of death and the yoke of a servile and base obedience. The period of an important revolution is at length arrived, the fortunate or unfortunate success of which will for ever determine the regret or admiration of posterity.

“ Shall we be free, or shall we be slaves? It is upon the solution of this great problem, that the destiny of three millions of men will depend for the present and for the future, the happiness or misery of their numberless descendants.

“ Rouse yourselves up, therefore, O you Americans! for the regions you inhabit were never covered with such dreadful clouds: you are called rebels, because you will be taxed only by your representatives. Justify this claim by your courage, or seal the loss of it with your blood.

“ It is no longer time to deliberate, when the hand of the oppressor is incessantly at work in forging chains for you; silence would be a crime, and inaction infamy. The preservation of the rights of the republic, that is

"the supreme law. He would be the lowest of slaves, who, in the danger which now threatens the liberty of America, would not exert his utmost efforts to preserve it."

Such was the general disposition : but the most important object, and the most difficult matter to effect in the midst of the general tumult, was to bring about a calm, by means of which a harmony of inclinations might be produced, which might give dignity, strength, and consistence, to the resolutions. It is this kind of harmony, which, from a number of loose and scattered parts, all of them easily broken, composes one complete whole, which it is impossible to subdue, unless one can succeed in dividing it either by strength or by policy. The necessity of this great union was perceived by the provinces of New Hampshire, of Massachusetts bay, of Rhode island, of Connecticut, of New York, of New Jersey, of the three counties of the Delaware, of Pennsylvania, of Maryland, of Virginia, and of the two Carolinas. These twelve colonies, to which Georgia hath since acceded, sent deputies to Philadelphia in the month of September 1774, who were appointed to defend their rights and their interests.

The disputes between the mother country and its colonies acquired at this period a degree of importance which they had not had before. It was no more a few individuals who opposed a stubborn resistance to imperious masters. It was the struggle between one body of men and another, between the congress of America and the parliament of England, between one nation and another. The resolutions taken on each side inflamed the minds of men still more and more, and increased the animosity. Every hope of reconciliation was dissipated. The sword was drawn on both sides ; Great Britain sent troops into the New World, and this other hemisphere prepared for its defence. Its citizens became soldiers. The materials for the conflagration are collected, and the fire will soon break out.

General Gage, who commanded the royal troops, sent a detachment from Boston on the night of the 18th of August 1775, with orders to destroy a magazine of arms and provisions collected by the Americans at Concord.

This detachment met with some militia at Lexington, whom they dispersed without much difficulty, continued their march with rapidity, and executed the orders they had received. But they had scarcely resumed the road to the capital, before they were assailed in a space of fifteen miles by a furious multitude, whom they destroyed, and by whom they were also slain. The blood of Englishmen, so often spilt in England by the hands of Englishmen, was now spilt in America, and the civil war was begun.

More regular engagements were fought upon the same field of battle in the ensuing months. Warren was the victim of these destructive and unnatural actions. The congress did honour to his remains.

"He is not dead," said the orator; "this excellent citizen shall not die. His memory will be eternally present, eternally dear to all good men, to all lovers of their country. He hath displayed in the limited career of a life of thirty-three years, the talents of a statesman, the virtues of a senator, and the soul of a hero.

"All you who are animated with the same interest, approach the bloody corpse of Warren. Bathe his honourable wounds with your tears; but do not remain too long over this inanimate body. Return to your habitations to inspire a detestation of the crime of tyranny. Let the hair of your children start upon their heads at this horrible representation; let their eyes sparkle, let their brows become threatening, and let their voices express their indignation; then you will give them arms, and your last wish will be, that they may either return conquerors, or perish like Warren."

The troubles with which Massachusetts bay was agitated were extended to the other provinces. The transactions were not, indeed, bloody in them, because there were no British troops; but in all parts the Americans seized upon the forts, the arms, and the provisions; they expelled their chiefs and the other agents of government, and ill-treated the inhabitants who appeared to favour the cause of the mother country. Some enterprising men carried their boldness so far as to seize upon the works formerly erected by the French near lake Champlain, between New

England and Canada, and even made an irruption into that vast region.

While private individuals, or separate districts, were to usefully serving the common cause, the congress was employed in the care of assembling an army, the command of which was given to George Washington, a native of Virginia, and known by a few successful actions in the preceding wars. The new general immediately flew to Massachusetts bay, drove the royal troops from one post to another, and compelled them to shut themselves up in Boston. Six thousand of his old soldiers, who had escaped the sword, sickness, and every other kind of distress, pressed either by hunger or by the enemy, embarked on the 24th of March 1776, with a precipitation which had all the appearance of flight. They went to seek an asylum in Nova Scotia, which, as well as Florida, had remained faithful to its former masters.

Right of the colonies to separate from the mother country.

THIS success was the first step of English America towards the revolution. It began to be openly wished for, and the principles which justified it were universally diffused. These principles, which originated in Europe, and particularly in England, had been transplanted by philosophy into America. The knowledge of the mother country was turned against itself; and it was said,—

One must be very careful not to confound societies and government with each other. Let us investigate their origin in order to distinguish them.

Man, thrown upon the globe as it were by chance, surrounded with all the evils of nature, obliged to defend and protect his life against the storms and hurricanes of the air, against the inundations of the waters, against the fires and the conflagrations of volcanoes, against the intemperature of the zones, either torrid or frozen, against the barrenness of the earth, which refuses to yield him any subsistence, or against its unfortunate fertility, which produces poisons under his feet, against the teeth of ferocious animals, who dispute with him his abode and his prey, and, by combating him themselves, seem to intend to acquire the domi-

nion of the globe, of which he thinks himself the master; man, in this state alone, and abandoned to himself, could do nothing for his own preservation. It was therefore necessary that he should unite and associate with his fellow creatures, in order to make a common stock of their strength and understanding. It is by this union that he hath been able to triumph over so many evils, that he hath fashioned the globe to his own use, kept the rivers within their boundaries, subdued the seas, insured his subsistence, conquered one part of the animals, by compelling them to serve him, and driven away the rest to a distance from his empire, in the midst of deserts or of forests, where their numbers diminish from one century to another. Men, united among themselves, have carried into execution what one man alone could never have accomplished; and they altogether concur in preserving their work. Such is the origin, such are the advantages and the end of society.

Government owes its rise to the necessity of preventing and repelling the injuries which the associates had to fear from each other. It is the sentinel who watches to prevent the common labours from being disturbed.

Society hath therefore arisen from the necessities of mankind, and government owes its origin to their vices. Society always tend to good; government ought always to tend towards repelling evil. Society is the first, and in its origin independent and free; government hath been instituted for it, and is only its instrument. The former has the right of commanding, the latter must obey. Society hath created public strength, and government, which hath received it from its hands, ought to consecrate it entirely to its use. In a word, society is essentially good; government, as it is well known, may be, and is but too often bad.

It hath been said that we were all born equals; but that is not true. That we had all the same rights: I do not know what rights are, where there is an inequality of talents and of strength, and no guarantee nor sanction. That nature hath offered to us all the same habitation and the same resources; that is not true. That we were indiscriminately endowed with the same means of defence;

that is not true : nor do I know in what sense it can be true that we enjoy the same qualities of body and of mind.

There is an original inequality between men which nothing can remedy. It must last for ever ; and all that can be obtained from the best legislation will not be to destroy it, but to prevent its abuses.

But hath not Nature herself produced the seeds of tyranny, by dealing with her children like a stepmother, and by creating some children weak, and others strong ? It is scarce possible to deny this, especially if we go back to a period previous to all legislation, when we shall see men as passionate and as unreasonable as brutes.

What views then can the founders of nations and the legislators have had ? To obviate all the disasters of this detested principle, by a kind of artificial equality, which should subject the members of a society, without exception, to one single impartial authority. It is a sword which is indiscriminately suspended over every head ; but this sword was only ideal. It was necessary that some hand, some natural being should hold it.

The result of this hath been, that the history of civilized man is nothing more than the history of his misery. All the pages of it are stained with blood ; some with that of the oppressors, the rest with that of the oppressed.

In this point of view, man appears more wicked and more unfortunate than animals. The different species of animals subsist at the expence of each other ; but the societies of men have never ceased to attack each other. There is no condition in the same society, which doth not either devour, or hath not itself devoured, whatever may have been, or whatever may be the form of government, or of artificial equality, which hath been opposed to the primitive or natural inequality.

But these forms of government, freely chosen by our forefathers, whatever sanction they may have received, either from oath, or from unanimous consent, or from permanency, are they to be considered as binding to their descendants ? Certainly not : and it is impossible, that you, Englishmen, who have successively undergone so many different revolutions in your political constitution ; who have

been driven from monarchy to tyranny, from tyranny to aristocracy, from aristocracy to democracy, and from democracy to anarchy ; it is impossible, I say, that you can think differently from me, without accusing yourselves of rebellion and perjury.

We examine things as philosophers ; and it is well known that our speculations have not occasioned civil wars. No subjects are more patient than we are. I shall therefore pursue my object without any apprehension for the consequences. If people be happy under their form of government, they will maintain it. If they be wretched, it will be neither your opinion nor mine, but the impossibility of suffering any more, or for any longer time, which will determine them to change. A salutary commotion, which the oppressor will call revolt, though it be no more than the legal exercise of an unalienable and natural right of the man who is oppressed, and even of him who is not oppressed.

Man has a will and a choice of his own ; but he can neither have a will nor a choice for another : and it would be an extravagance to exercise his will and his choice for him who is not yet born, for him who will not exist for many centuries after. There is no individual who hath not a right to seek elsewhere a better form of government, if he be dissatisfied with that of his own country. There is no society which hath not the same liberty of altering its own form of government, as its ancestors had to adopt it. Upon this point, societies are in the same state as in the first instant of their civilization. It would be a great evil if it were not so ; and indeed in that case there could be no remedy against the greatest of all evils. Millions of men must have been condemned to endless misfortune. It will therefore be admitted, in conformity to my principles.

That there is no form of government, the prerogative of which is to be immutable.

That there is no political authority, created either yesterday or a thousand years ago, which cannot be abrogated, either ten years hence, or to-morrow.

Whoever thinks otherwise is a slave ; he is the idolater of the works of his own hands.

Whoever thinks otherwise is a madman, who devotes himself, as well as his family, his children, and his children's children, to everlasting misery, by granting to his ancestors the right of stipulating for him when he was not in being, and by arrogating to himself the right of stipulating for his descendants, who are not yet in being.

All authority in this world hath begun either by the consent of the subjects, or by the strength of the master. It may be legally put a stop to in either of the cases. There is nothing which favours tyranny against liberty.

The truth of these principles is the more essential, as every power tends by its nature to despotism, even in that nation which is the most jealous of its rights, even in England.

I have heard a whig say, that as long as a bad sovereign, or at least a bad minister, could not be sent to Tyburn with as little formality, parade, tumult, and surprise, as the most obscure malefactor, the nation would never either have a proper idea, nor the full enjoyment of its rights, in a manner suitable to a people who venture to think, and to call themselves a free people. This man was perhaps a fanatic; but madmen sometimes utter words of profound sense. Nevertheless, an administration which you yourselves own to be ignorant, corrupt, and audacious, shall imperiously precipitate you with impunity into the deepest abyss of misfortune.

The quantity of specie circulating among you is not very considerable. You are overburthened with paper currency, under every denomination. All the gold of Europe, heaped up in your treasury, would be scarce sufficient to pay off your national debt. It is not known by what kind of incredible illusion this fictitious coin is kept up. The most trifling event may in a moment bring it into discredit. One single alarm is sufficient to induce a sudden bankruptcy. The dreadful consequences of this breach of faith are beyond our imagination. And this is the moment which hath been chosen to make you declare against your colonies, that is to say, to involve yourselves in an unjust, senseless, and ruinous, war. What will become of you, when one important branch of your commerce shall be annihilated; when you shall have lost one third of your possessions; when you shall have massacred

one or two millions of your fellow citizens ; when your strength shall be exhausted, your merchants ruined, your manufacturers reduced to perish for want ; when your debt shall be increased, and your revenue diminished ? Beware ! the blood of the Americans will sooner or later fall upon your own heads. Its effusion will be revenged by your own hands ; and the moment is at hand.

“ But,” you say, “ they are rebels.”—Why are they so ? Because they will not be your slaves ? A people who are subject to the will of another, who can dispose at pleasure of their government, of their laws, and of their commerce, who can tax them according to their own fancy, limit their industry, and fetter it by arbitrary prohibitions, are slaves, and their servitude is worse than that which they would experience under a tyrant ; because a tyrant may be got rid of, either by expulsion or by assassination. Both these acts have been done by you. But a nation can neither be put to death nor expelled. Liberty can be expected only from a rupture, the consequence of which must be the ruin of one or the other of the nations, and sometimes of both. A tyrant is a monster with only one head, which may be stricken off at a blow. A despotic nation is a hydra with a thousand heads, which can only be smitten off by a thousand swords at once. The crime of the oppression exercised by a tyrant excites universal indignation against himself alone. The same crime, committed by a numerous society, spreads the horror and the shame of it amongst a multitude, which is never ashamed. It is the crime of every body and of no body ; and the sentiment of misguided despair knows not upon what object to fix its resentment.

“ But they are our subjects.”—Your subjects ! not more than the inhabitants of the province of Wales are the subjects of the county of Lancaster. The authority of one nation over another can only be founded upon conquest, upon general consent, or upon proposed and accepted conditions. Conquest is no more binding than robbery ; the consent of ancestors cannot compel descendants ; and no conditions can be consistent with the sacrifice of liberty. Liberty cannot be bartered for any thing, because no equivalent can be given for it. This is the speech

you have made to your tyrants, and we now address it to you in favour of your colonists.

“The land which they occupy is ours.”—Yours! It is thus you call it, because you have invaded it. But supposing it be so, doth not the charter of concession oblige you to treat the Americans as your countrymen? and do you comply with this obligation? But to what purpose are concessions and charters, which grant what one is not master of, and which consequently one hath no right of granting to a small number of feeble men, compelled by circumstances to receive as a gratuity what they have a natural right to? Besides, have the descendants, who are now alive been invited to accede to a compact, signed by their ancestors? The truth of this principle must be acknowledged, or the descendants of James must be recalled. What right was there to drive him away, which we had not equally to separate from you? say the Americans. And what answer can be made to them?

“They are ungrateful; we are their founders; we have been their defenders; we have indebted ourselves for them.”—For yourselves, you may say, as much, or more than for them. If you have defended them, it is in the same manner as you would have defended the sultan of Constantinople, if your ambition or your interest had required it. But have they not repaid this obligation, by delivering to you their productions, by exclusively receiving your merchandize, at the exorbitant price you have chosen to put upon it, by submitting to the prohibitions which thwarted their industry, and to the restrictions with which you have oppressed their property? Have they not assisted you, and indebted themselves for you? Have they not taken up arms and fought for you? Have they not acceded to your demands, when you have made them in a manner suitable to freemen? When have they ever refused you any thing, unless when presenting your bayonets to their breasts, you have said to them, “your treasure, or your life; die, or be our slaves.” What! because you have been beneficent, have you the right to become oppressors? Will the nations also convert their expectations of gratitude into a barbarous pretence to disgrace and insult those who have had the misfortune to receive their benefits? Individuals, perhaps, though it be not their duty, may in

their benefactors bear with their tyrants. In them, undoubtedly, it is great, it is magnanimous, to consent to be unhappy, rather than be ungrateful. But the system of morality among nations is different. The public felicity is the first law, as it is the first duty. The primary obligation of these great bodies is towards themselves. They owe, above all things, liberty and justice to those who compose them. Every child who is born in a state, every citizen who comes to breathe the air of a country which he hath chosen for himself, or which Nature hath given him, has a right to the greatest degree of happiness he can possibly enjoy. Every obligation which cannot be reconciled with that principle is void. Every contrary claim is an encroachment upon his rights. Of what concern is it to him, if his ancestors have been favoured when he himself is destined to be the victim? By what right can we exact the payment of this usurious debt of benefits, which he hath not even experienced? No. To arrogate to one's self a similar claim, against a whole nation and its posterity, is to subvert all the ideas of order and policy; it is to betray all the laws of morality, while we invoke their countenance. What hath not England done for Hanover? But is Hanover subject to your command? All the republics of Greece were connected with each other by mutual services? Did any one of them exact, as a token of gratitude, the right of disposing of the administration of the republic that had received the obligation.

“But our honour is compromised.”—Say rather, the honour of your bad ministers, and not your own. In what consists the real honour of him who is in an error? Is it to persist in it, or to acknowledge it? The man who returns to sentiments of justice hath no occasion to be ashamed. Englishmen, you have been too precipitate. Why did you not wait till riches had corrupted the Americans, as you are corrupted? Then they would have been as little concerned for their liberty as you for yours. Then, subdued by wealth, your arms would have been useless. But you have attacked them in an instant, when what they had to lose, liberty, could not be balanced by what they had to preserve.

"But in later times they would have become still more numerous."—I acknowledge it. You have therefore only attempted the enslaving of a people, whom time would have set free in spite of you. In twenty or thirty years, the remembrance of your atrocious deeds will be recent; and the fruit of them will be taken away from you: then nothing but shame and remorse will remain to you. There is a decree of nature which you cannot change; it is, that great bodies always give law to smaller ones. But if the Americans should then undertake against Great Britain what you have undertaken against them, would you not say to them exactly what they say to you at this instant? Wherefore should motives which affect you but little, coming from them, appear more solid when coming from you.

"They will neither obey our parliament, nor adopt our constitution."—Have they made, or can they change them?

"We obey them without having had, either in past times, or without having at present any influence over them."—That is to say, that you are slaves, and that you cannot suffer freemen. Nevertheless, do not confound the position of the Americans with yours. You have representatives, and they have none; you have voices which speak for you, and no one stipulates for them. If the voices be bought and sold, this is an excellent reason for them to disclaim this advantage.

"They would be independent of us."—Are not you so of them.

"They will never be able to support themselves without us."—If that be the case, keep quiet, necessity will bring them back to you.

"But what if we could not subsist without them?"—This would be a great misfortune: but to cut their throats, in order to prevent it, is a singular expedient.

"It is for their interest, it is for their good, that we are angry with them, as we are with children who behave improperly."—Their interest and their good! Who hath appointed you the judges of these two points which touch them so nearly, and which they ought to know better than you? If it should happen that a citizen should enter

by force into the house of another, upon a pretence that he was a man of great understanding, and that no one was more capable of maintaining good order and peace at his neighbour's house ; would not his neighbour have a right to desire him to withdraw, and concern himself about his own affairs ? But what shall we say if the affairs of this officious hypocrite were much in disorder ? If he were nothing more than an ambitious man, who, under pretence of governing, wanted to usurp ; if under the mask of benevolence he concealed only views full of injustice, such, for instance, as the endeavour to relieve his own difficulties at the expence of his fellow-citizens ?

“ We are the mother country.”—What, are the most sacred names always to serve as veils to ambition and to interest ? If you be the mother country, fulfil the duties of it. Moreover, the colony is formed of different nations, among whom some will grant and others will refuse you this title. While all of them will say to you at once, there is a time when the authority of parents over their children is to cease, and this time is that when children can provide for themselves. What term have you fixed for our emancipation ? Be honest, and confess you flattered yourselves that you should have kept us under perpetual tutelage. This tutelage however might be supportable, if it were not changed for us into an unbearable restraint ; if our advantage were not incessantly sacrificed to yours ; if we were not obliged to suffer a multitude of oppressions in detail from the governors, the judges, the financiers, and the military men whom you send to us ; if most of them at their arrival in our climates did not bring with them degraded characters, ruined fortunes, rapacious hands ; and the insolence of subaltern tyrants, who, tired with obeying the laws of their own country, come to indemnify themselves in a New World, by exercising there a power which is too frequently arbitrary. You are the mother country, but far from encouraging our progress, you stand in awe of it. You confine our industry, and you counteract our rising strength. Nature, in favouring us, disappoints your secret wishes ; or rather it is your desire that she should remain in a state of eternal infancy, with respect to every thing that may be useful to us ; and

and fellow-citizens worthy of you. Was this a reason for increasing your anger? What! have your ancestors admired the Dutch shaking off the Spanish yoke: and shall you be astonished that your descendants, your countrymen, your brethren, those who felt your blood circulating in their veins, should rather choose to spill it than submit to the yoke, and should prefer death to a life of slavery? A stranger, over whom you would assume the same pretensions, would have disarmed you; if laying bare his breast, he had said, "bury your dagger here, or leave me free." And yet you murder your brother, and you murder him without remorse, because he is your brother? Englishmen! what can be more ignominious than the ferociousness of a man proud of his liberty, and encroaching upon that of another? Must we be taught to believe, that the greatest enemy of liberty is the man who enjoys it? Alas! we are but too much disposed to believe it. Enemies to kings, you have all their haughtiness. Enemies to the royal prerogative, you display it in all parts. You shew yourselves tyrants everywhere. Tyrants of nations and of your colonies; if you should prevail in this contest, it is because Heaven will have been inattentive to the vows that are addressed to it from all regions of the earth.

Since the seas have not swallowed up your proud satellites, tell me what will become of them, if there should arise in the New World an eloquent man, who should promise eternal salvation to those who should perish sword in hand, the martyrs of liberty. Americans, let your priests be incessantly seen in your pulpits, with crowns in their hands, and shewing you the heavens opened. Priests of the New World, it is time to expiate the ancient fanaticism, which hath desolated and ravaged America, by a fanaticism more fortunate, the offspring of politics and of liberty. But you will not deceive your fellow-citizens. God, who is the first principle of justice and of order, abhors tyrants. God hath imprinted in the heart of man the sacred love of liberty, and will not suffer that servitude should degrade and disfigure the most beautiful of his works. If apotheosis be due to man, it is certainly to him who fights and dies for his country. Place his image in your churches, and put it near your altars. It will be the wor-

ship of the country. Compose a political and religious kalendar, in which every day shall be marked with the name of some one of those heroes who shall have spilt his blood to make you free. Your posterity will read them one day with a holy respect; they will say, these are the names of those who have set half the world at liberty, and who, exerting themselves for our happiness before we existed, have prevented that at our birth we should hear the rattling of chains over our cradles.

WHEN the cause of the colonies was debated in the national assemblies, we have heard many excellent pleadings pronounced in their favour. But perhaps the following would have been the most proper to address to them.

Measures England ought to have adopted in her colonies.

“ I will say nothing to you, gentlemen, of the justice or injustice of your pretensions. I am not so much a stranger to public affairs, to be ignorant that this preliminary examination, which is sacred in all other circumstances of life, would be improper and ridiculous in this. I will not enter into what expectations you may have of success, nor will I examine whether you will prevail in this cause, although this subject might appear of some importance to you, and might probably engage your attention. Nor will I even compare the advantages of your situation if you should succeed, with the consequences that will follow if you should fail. But I will suppose at once, that you have reduced the colonies to the degree of servitude which you require. I only wish to be informed how you will maintain them in it. Will it be by a standing army? But this army, which will exhaust you of men and money, will it follow or not the increase of population? there are but two answers to be made to this question, and of these two answers one seems to me to be absurd, and the other brings you back to the situation in which you now are. I have reflected much upon the matter, and if I mistake not, I have discovered the only reasonable and sure measure you have to pursue. This is, as soon as you shall have made yourselves masters of them, to stop the progress of

“ population, since it appears to you more advantageous,
 “ more honourable, and more proper, to rule over a small
 “ number of slaves, than to have a nation of freemen for
 “ your equals and friends.

“ But you will ask me, how is the progress of popula-
 “ tion to be stopped ? The expedient might perhaps dis-
 “ gust men of weak and pusillanimous minds ; but fortu-
 “ nately there are none such in this august assembly. This
 “ expedient is to put to death, without mercy, the great-
 “ est part of these unworthy rebels, and to reduce the
 “ rest to the condition of negroes. The brave and gener-
 “ ous Spartans, so celebrated in ancient and modern his-
 “ tory, have set you the example. Like them, with their
 “ faces muffled up in their cloaks, let our fellow-citizens
 “ and satellites go out clandestinely in the night-time, and
 “ massacre the children of our helots by the side of their
 “ fathers and on the breasts of their mothers, leaving on-
 “ ly a sufficient number of them alive for the labours, and
 “ for our security.”

Englishmen, you shudder at this horrid proposal, and you ask what measure might be adopted ; either conquerors or conquered, this is what you have to do ? If the resentment excited by your barbarities can be calmed, if the Americans can shut their eyes upon the ravages that surround them, if when walking over the ruins of their cities reduced to ashes, and of their habitations destroyed, over the bones of their fellow citizens scattered in the field ; if while they breathe the scent of blood which your hands have spilt in all parts, it can be possible that they should forget the enormities of your despotism ; if they can allow themselves to put the least trust in your discourses, and can persuade themselves that you have seriously renounced the injustice of your pretensions, begin by recalling the assassins who are in your pay ; restore liberty to their ports, which you now keep blocked up ; let your vessels depart from their coasts ; and if there be a wise citizen among you, let him take an olive branch in his hand, let him present himself to them and say :

“ O you, our fellow citizens and our old friends, allow
 “ us to use this title ; we have indeed profaned it, but our
 “ repentance makes us worthy of resuming it, and we shall

hereafter aspire to the glory of preserving it ; we confess, in the presence of Heaven, and of this earth, which have been witnesses of it, that our pretensions have been unjust, and our proceedings barbarous. Forget them as we do. Build up your ramparts and your fortresses. Assemble yourselves again in your peaceable habitations. Let us wipe out from our memory even the last drop of blood that has been spilt. We admire the generous spirit which hath directed you. It is the same to which, in similar circumstances, we have owed our salvation. It is particularly by these signs that we know you to be our fellow citizens and our brethren : your wish is liberty, and you shall be free. You shall be free in all the extent that we ourselves have attached to this sacred name. It is not from us that you hold this right ; we can neither give it nor take it away from you. You have received it as we have, from nature, which the crime and the sword of tyrants can fight against, but cannot destroy. We pretend not to any kind of superiority over you ; the honour of aspiring to an equality is sufficiently glorious for us. We are too well acquainted with the inestimable advantage of governing ourselves, to be desirous hereafter of depriving you of it.

Masters and supreme arbitrators of your own legislation, if in your states you can create a better form of government than ours is, we congratulate you previously upon it. Your happiness will inspire us with no other sentiment than the desire of imitating you. Form for yourselves constitutions adapted to your climate, to your soil, and to the New World, which you are civilizing. Who can be better acquainted with your own wants than yourselves ? Proud and virtuous souls, such as yours are, ought not to obey any laws except those which they give themselves. Every other yoke would be unworthy of them. Regulate your taxes yourselves. We only ask of you to conform to our custom in the levying of the impost. We will present you with a state of our wants, and you will determine yourselves the just proportion between your supplies and your riches.

Moreover, exercise your own industry as we do ours, of and that without any restraint. Make the best advances

" tage of the benefits of nature, and of the fertile regions
 " which you inhabit. Let the iron of your mines, the fleeces
 " of your flocks, the skins of the wild animals wandering
 " in your forests, be prepared in your own manufactures,
 " and acquire in your hands an additional value. Let your
 " ports be free. Let your commodities, and the produc-
 " tion of your arts, be conveyed to all parts of the world,
 " from whence you may also derive all those which you
 " are in want of. This is one of our privileges, let it also
 " be yours. The empire of the ocean, which we have
 " subdued by two centuries of grandeur and glory, belongs
 " to you as well as to us. We will be united by the ties
 " of commerce. You will bring your productions to us,
 " which we will accept in preference to those of all other
 " people; and we hope that you will prefer ours to those
 " of foreign nations, without, however, being restrained to
 " it by any law, unless by that of the common interest,
 " and by the title of fellow citizens and friends.

" Let your ships and ours, decorated with the same flag,
 " cover the seas; and when these friendly vessels shall meet
 " in the midst of the deserts of the ocean, let shouts of joy
 " be heard on both sides. Let peace be renewed, and let
 " concord last for ever between us. We understand at
 " length, that the chain of reciprocal benevolence is the
 " only one that can connect empires at such a distance,
 " and that every other principle of union would be unjust
 " and precarious.

" According to this new plan of everlasting friendship,
 " let agriculture, industry, legislation, the arts, and that
 " first of all sciences, that of doing the greatest good to
 " states and to mankind, be improved among us. Let the
 " account of your happiness invite around your dwellings
 " all the unfortunate men upon the face of the earth. Let
 " tyrants of all countries, and all oppressors, whether po-
 " litical or religious, know, that there exists a place upon
 " the earth where one may escape from their chains;
 " where humanity disgraced hath raised its head again;
 " where the harvests grow for the poor; where the laws
 " are no more than the guarantee of happiness; where re-
 " ligion is free, and conscience hath ceased to be a slave;
 " where Nature, in a word, seems to wish to justify herself

“for having created man; and where government, for so long a time guilty over all the earth, at length makes ample reparation for its crimes. Let the idea of such an asylum alarm the despots, and serve as a restraint to them; for if the happiness of mankind be a matter of indifference to them, they are at least ambitious and avaricious, and are therefore anxious to preserve both their power and their riches.

“We ourselves, O! our fellow citizens and our friends, we ourselves will profit by your example. If our constitution should be impaired; if public wealth should corrupt the court, and the court the nation; if our kings, to whom we have given so many terrible lessons, should at length forget them; if we, who were an august people, were threatened with becoming the meanest and vilest of all herds by selling ourselves; the sight of your virtues and of your laws might perhaps reanimate us. It would recal to our degraded minds both the value and the grandeur of liberty: and if this example should be ineffectual; if slavery, the consequence of venal corruption, should one day establish itself in that same country, which hath been deluged with blood in the cause of liberty; and where our fathers have seen scaffolds erected for tyrants; we will then abandon this ungrateful land devoted to despotism, and we will leave the monster to reign over a desert. You will then receive us as friends and brethren. You will partake with us that soil, that air, as free as the souls of its generous inhabitants; and thanks to your virtues, we shall find England and a country again.

“Such are, brave fellow citizens, both our hopes and our wishes. Receive, therefore, our oaths as the pledges of so holy an alliance. Let us invoke, to render this treaty more solemn, let us invoke our common ancestors, who have all been animated with the spirit of liberty as you are, and who have not feared to die in its defence. Let us call to witness the memory of the illustrious founders of your colonies, that of your august legislators, of the philosopher Locke, who was the first man upon earth who made a code of toleration, and of the venerable Penn, who first founded a city of brothers.

“ The souls of these great men, whose eyes are undoubtedly
 “ in this moment fixed upon us, are worthy to preside at a
 “ treaty which is to secure the peace of two worlds. Let
 “ us swear in their presence, and upon those arms with
 “ which you have fought us, to remain ever united and
 “ faithful ; and when we have pronounced altogether an
 “ oath of peace, then let these same arms be taken up, and
 “ let them be conveyed into a sacred deposit, where fathers
 “ will shew them to every rising generation : and there let
 “ them be kept faithfully from age to age, in order to be
 “ one day turned against the first man, whether English or
 “ American, who shall dare to propose the breaking off
 “ of this alliance, equally useful and equally honourable to
 “ both nations.”

At this discourse methinks I hear the cities, the ham-
 lets, the fields, and all the shores, of North America, re-
 sound with acclamations, and repeating with emotion the
 name of their English brethren, the name of the mother
 country. Joyful fireworks succeed to the conflagrations
 of discord ; and in the meanwhile, the nations, jealous of
 your power, will remain silent in astonishment and despair.

The parliament is going to assemble, and what have we
 to expect ! Will the voice of reason be heard there, or will
 they persevere in their folly ? Will they be the defenders
 of the people, or the instrument of the tyranny of minis-
 ters ? Will their acts be the decrees of a free nation, or
 edicts dictated by the court ? I attend at the debates.
 These revered places resound with harangues full of mo-
 deration and wisdom. Soft persuasion seem to flow from
 the lips of the most distinguished orators. They draw tears
 from the audience. My heart is elated with hope, when
 suddenly a voice, the organ of despotism and of war, sus-
 pends this delightful emotion.

“ Englishmen,” saith this furious declaimer, “ can you
 “ hesitate one moment ? They are your rights, your most
 “ important interests ; it is the glory of your name which
 “ must be defended. These great benefits are not attack-
 “ ed by a foreign power, but threatened by a domestic
 “ enemy. The danger is the greater, the outrage more
 “ sensibly felt.

“ Between two rival nations in arms for mutual preten-

" sions, policy may sometimes suspend the fight. Against
 " rebellious subjects the greatest fault is delay. All mo-
 " deration is weakness. The standard of rebellion was
 " raised by boldness ; let it be pulled down by force. Let
 " the sword of justice fall upon those who have unsheath-
 " ed it. Let us lose no time ; to stifle revolutions, there
 " is a first moment to be seized upon. Let us not leave
 " to astonished minds, the leisure to accustom themselves
 " to their crime ; to the chiefs, the time to confirm their
 " power ; nor to the people, that of learning to obey new
 " masters. The people in a rebellion are almost always
 " drawn away by some foreign impulse ; neither their fury,
 " nor their hatred, nor their attachment, belong to them.
 " Their passions are given to them as their weapons. Let
 " us display before their eyes the strength and majesty of
 " the British empire. They will soon fall down at our
 " feet ; they will pass on, in an instant, from terror to re-
 " morse, and from remorse to obedience. If we must have
 " recourse to the severity of arms, let there be no quar-
 " ter. In civil war, mercy is the most false of all virtues.
 " When once the sword is drawn, it should never be sheath-
 " ed till submission be attained. Henceforward it is theirs
 " to answer to heaven and to earth for their own misfor-
 " tunes. Let us consider, that a temporary severity, ex-
 " ercised in these rebellious regions, must secure to us obe-
 " dience and peace for ages to come.

" To suspend our exertions, and to disarm us, we are
 " repeatedly told, that this country is peopled with our
 " fellow-citizens, our friends, and our brothers. What
 " shall we invoke in their favour names which they have
 " outraged, and ties which they have broken ? These
 " names, and these sacred ties, are the things that accuse
 " them, and pronounce them guilty. Since when do these
 " titles, so revered, impose duties only upon us ? Since
 " when have rebellious children the right of taking up
 " arms against their mother, of depriving her of her inhe-
 " ritance, and of tearing her to pieces ? They talk of li-
 " berty. I respect the name as much as they do ; but, is
 " this liberty independence ? Is it the right of subverting
 " a legislation, established and founded for two centuries
 " past ? Is it the right of subverting all our rights ? They

“ talk of liberty ; and I talk of the supremacy and the
 “ sovereign power of England.

“ What, if they had any complaints to make, if they
 “ refused to bear with us a small portion of the burthen,
 “ which oppresses us, and to share in our expences, as we
 “ make them share in our grandeur, had they no other
 “ way of doing this but by rebellion, but by arms ? They
 “ are called our fellow citizens, and our friends ; but I
 “ behold in them nothing more than our persecutors, and
 “ the most cruel enemies of our country. Undoubtedly,
 “ we have had common ancestors ; but these respectable
 “ forefathers I myself call upon with confidence. If their
 “ shades could resume their place here, their indignation
 “ would be equal to ours. With what resentment would
 “ these virtuous citizens hear, that those of their descen-
 “ dants who had settled beyond the seas, had no sooner
 “ felt their own strength, than they had made the guilty
 “ trial of it against their country ; and that they have turn-
 “ ed their own benefits against her ? All of them, yes, all
 “ of them, even that pacific set into whom their founder
 “ infused the duty of never steeping their hands in blood ;
 “ they who had respected the rights and the lives of sa-
 “ vage people ; they who, in the enthusiasm of humani-
 “ ty, have broken the fetters of their slaves ; at present,
 “ equally faithless to their country and to their religion,
 “ take up arms for the purpose of carnage, and to use
 “ them against you. They treat all men as their brethren ;
 “ and you alone, of all people, are excluded from this
 “ title. They have taught the world, that the savage Ame-
 “ ricans, and the negroes of Africa, are henceforth less
 “ strangers to them than the citizens of England.

“ Arm yourselves, therefore ; avenge your offended
 “ rights, avenge your greatness betrayed. Display that
 “ power, which makes itself be feared in Europe, in
 “ Africa, and in India ; and which hath so often astonished
 “ America itself : and since between a sovereign people,
 “ and the subject that rebels, there can henceforth be no
 “ other treaty than that of force, let force determine the
 “ matter. Preserve and retake that universe which be-
 “ longs to you, and which ingratitude and boldness would
 “ deprive you of.”

THE sophisms of a vehement orator, *England resolves* supported by the influence of the crown, *to reduce her colonies by force.* and by national pride, extinguished in *most of the representatives of the people:* the desire of a pacific arrangement. The new resolutions are similar to the former. Every thing in them even bears, in a more decisive manner, the stamp of ferociousness and despotism. Armies are raised, and fleets are equipped. The generals and the admirals sail towards the New World, with destructive and sanguinary orders and plans. Nothing but unreserved submission can preserve or put a stop to the ravages ordained against the colonies.

Till this memorable period, the Americans had confined themselves to a resistance authorized by the English laws themselves. They had shewn no other ambition, but that of being maintained in the very limited rights which they had always enjoyed. Their chiefs, even, who might be supposed to have more extensive views, had not yet ventured to speak to the people of any thing more than an advantageous accommodation. By going further, they would have been apprehensive of losing the confidence of the people, attached by habit to an empire under the protection of which they had prospered. The report of the great preparations that were making for war in the Old Hemisphere, either to enslave or reduce the new one to ashes, extinguished what remains there might be of affection for the original government. It now remained only to inspire the minds of men with energy. This effect was produced by a work intitled "Common Sense." We shall here give an account of the ground work of this doctrine, without confining ourselves precisely to the order the writer hath adopted.

Never, says the author of this celebrated work, never did an interest of greater importance engage the attention of the nation. It is not the concern of a city, or of a province; it is that of an immense continent, and of a great part of the globe. It is not the concern of a day, it is that of ages. The present period will determine the fate of a long futurity; and many hundred years. The cessation of our existence, the sun, in giving light to the hemisphere, will shine either upon our shame or our

ry. We have for a long time talked of reconciliation and peace; but every thing is changed. As soon as arms are taken up, as soon as the first drop of blood is spilt, the time for debate is past. One day hath given rise to a revolution. One day hath transported us into a new age.

Men of timorous minds, and who judge of the future by the past, think we are in want of the protection of England. She may be useful to a rising colony; she is become dangerous to a nation completely formed. Infancy stands in need of support, but youth must walk free, and with the elevation that is suitable to it. Between one nation and another, as between man and man, he who can have the power and the right to protect me, may also have the power and the will to do me an injury. I give up the protector in order that I may not have a master to fear.

In Europe, the people are too closely pressed together to admit this part of the globe to enjoy constant peace. The interests of courts and of nations are always clashing with each other. As the friends of England, we are obliged to have all her enemies. The dowry which this alliance will bring to America is perpetual war. Let us, therefore, separate. Neutrality, trade, and peace; such are the foundations of our grandeur.

The authority of Great Britain must sooner or later have an end. This is the operation of nature, of necessity, and of time. The English government, therefore, can only give us a temporary constitution; and we shall only bequeath to our posterity an American state, burthened with dissensions and debts. If we be desirous of securing our happiness, let us separate. If we be fathers, and if we love our children, let us separate. Laws and liberty, such is the inheritance we owe them.

England is at too great a distance from us to govern us. What, shall we always cross two thousand leagues to demand the protection of laws, to claim justice, to justify ourselves of imaginary crimes, and meanly to solicit the court and the ministry of a foreign climate? Must we wait whole years for every answer, supposing it were not too often injustice that we were obliged to go in search of across the ocean? No; for a great state, the centre and

the seat of power must necessarily be in the state itself. Nothing but the despotism of the east can possibly have accustomed the people thus to receive laws from distant masters, or from bashaws, who are the representatives of invisible tyrants. But remember, that the more the distance increases, the heavier is the weight of despotism; and that the people, then deprived of all the benefits of government, have none but the misfortunes and vices of it.

Nature hath not created a world, in order to subject it to the inhabitants of an island in another hemisphere. Nature hath established laws of equilibrium, which she follows in all parts, in the heavens as on the earth. By the rule of quantity and of distance, America can belong only to itself.

There is no government without a mutual confidence, between him who commands and him who obeys; otherwise all is over, the communication is interrupted, and cannot possibly be renewed. England hath shewn too evidently that she wanted to command us as slaves; America, that she was equally sensible of her rights and her strength. Each of them hath betrayed its secret; and from that moment no treaty can take place. It would be signed by hatred and mistrust; hatred which cannot forgive, and mistrust, which in its nature is irreconcilable.

Would you know what would be the consequence of an accommodation? Your ruin. You stand in need of laws, and will not obtain them. Who is to give them to you? The English nation? But she is jealous of your increase. The king? He is your enemy. Yourself, in your assemblies? Do you not recollect, that every legislation is subject to the negative right of the monarch who wishes to subdue you? This right would be a terrible one, incessantly militating against you. Should you make demands, they will be eluded; should you form plans of grandeur and commerce, they would become an object of alarm for the mother country. Your government would be nothing more than a clandestine war, such as that of an enemy who wishes to destroy without fighting; it would be, in political economy, a slow and concealed assassination, which gives rise to languor, which prolongs and entertains weak-

ness, and which, by a destructive art, keeps the body equally suspended between life and death. If you should submit to England, such will be your fate.

We have a right to take up arms. Our rights are necessity, a just defence; our misfortunes, those of our children, the enormities committed against us. Our rights are our august title of nation. The sword must decide between us. The tribunal of war is henceforth the only tribunal that exists for us. If we must fight, let it at least be for a cause that is worthy, and which, will reward us for the lavishment of our riches and our blood. What! shall we expose ourselves to see our cities destroyed, our countries ravaged, our families put to the sword, merely to obtain an honourable accommodation; that is to say, to entreat for new chains, and to cement ourselves the edifice of our slavery? What! shall it be by the light of conflagrations; shall it be over the graves of our fathers, of our children, and of our wives, that we shall sign a treaty with our oppressors? And will they, covered over with our blood, condescend to forgive us? Alas! we should then be nothing more than a vile object of astonishment to Europe, of indignation to America, and of contempt even to our enemies. If we can obey, we have had no right to contend. Liberty alone can absolve us. Liberty, and entire liberty, is the only aim worthy of our efforts and of our perils. What do I say? It belongs to us from this moment. It is in the bloody plains of Lexington that our claims are registered; it is there that England hath torn in pieces that contract which united us to her. Yes, at the instant when England fired the first shot against us, Nature herself proclaimed us free and independent.

Let us avail ourselves of the benefits we receive from our enemies. The youth of nations is the age most favourable to their independence. It is the period of energy and vigour. Our minds are not yet surrounded with that parade of luxury which serves as a hostage to tyranny. Our limbs are not yet enervated by the arts of effeminacy. There is none of that nobility bearing sway among us, which, even by its constitution, is allied to kings; which is no further attached to liberty, than when it can

make it the means of oppression ; that nobility, eager of rights and titles, for whom, in times of revolution and crisis, the people are nothing more than an instrument, and for whom the supreme power is a corrupter always at hand.

Your colonies are formed of plain and courageous, laborious and proud men ; men who are at once the proprietors and the cultivators of their lands. Liberty is the first of their wants. Rustic labours have previously inured them to war. Public enthusiasm will bring forth talents unknown. It is in revolutions that the minds of men are enlarged, that heroes make their appearance, and take their post. Recal Holland to your memory, and the multitude of extraordinary men to whom the contest for her liberty gave birth ; such is your example. Recollect her success : such is your presage.

Let our first measure be to form a constitution that may unite us. The moment is come. Later than this, it would be abandoned to an uncertain futurity, and to the caprices of chance. The more we acquire men and riches, the more barriers will arise between us. How shall we then conciliate so many interests and so many provinces ? For a union of this kind, it is necessary that every people should be sensible at once of the weakness and strength of the whole. Great calamities or great apprehensions must prevail. Then it is, that among nations, as among individuals, those vigorous and rooted friendships take place, which reciprocally bind the souls and the interest of men. Then it is, that one single spirit universally prevailing, forms the genius of states ; and that all the scattered forces become, by being collected, one sole and terrible force. Thanks to our persecutors, we are now at that period ; and if we have courage, it will be a fortunate one for us. Few nations have seized the favourable moment for the formation of their government. If this moment should once escape, it never returns ; and men are consequently punished with ages of anarchy and slavery. Let not a similar fault prepare similar regrets for us, which would be ineffectual.

Let us therefore seize upon the moment which is the

only one for us. It is in our power to form the finest constitution that ever existed among men. You have read in your sacred writings the history of mankind buried under a general deluge of the globe. One single family survived, and was commissioned by the Supreme Being to renew the earth. We are that family. Despotism hath overwhelmed every thing; and we can renew the world a second time.

At this instant, we are going to determine the fate of a race of men more numerous, perhaps, than all the people of Europe taken together. Shall we wait till we become the prey of the conqueror, and till the hopes of the universe shall be frustrated? Let us suppose, that all the future generations of the world have at this moment their eyes fixed upon us, and are asking us for liberty. We are going to settle their destiny. If we betray them, they will one day walk over our graves with their chains, and perhaps load us with imprecations.

Remember a work that hath appeared among us, and the motto of which was, UNION OR DEATH.

Let us therefore unite, and begin by declaring our INDEPENDENCE. That alone can efface the title of rebellious subjects, which our insolent oppressors dare to bestow upon us. That alone can make us rise to that dignity that is our due, insure us allies among the powers, and imprint respect even on our enemies; and if we treat with them, that alone can give us the right of treating with that right and majesty which belongs to a nation.

But I will repeat it: let us lose no time. Our uncertainty occasions our weakness. Let us dare to be free, and we are so. When we are ready to get over this step, we start back. We all look at each other with anxious curiosity. It seems as if we were astonished at our boldness, and frightened at our courage. But it is no longer time to calculate. In great affairs, and where there is but one great measure to adopt, too much circumspection ceases to be prudence. Whatever is extreme demands an extreme resolution. Then the most enterprising steps are the most prudent; and the excess of boldness becomes even the means and the warrant of success.

SUCH was the basis of the sentiments and ideas diffused in this work. They confirmed in their principles those bold men, who for a long time past had asked to be entirely detached from the mother country. The timid citizens, who had hitherto hesitated, at length determined on this great separation. The wish for independence had a sufficient number of partisans, to enable the general congress to declare it on the 4th of July 1776.

The colonies declare themselves independent of England.

O that I had received from nature the genius and eloquence of the celebrated orators of Athens and Rome! With what sublimity, with what enthusiasm should I not speak of those generous men, who, by their patience, their wisdom, and their courage, have erected this grand edifice. Hancock, Franklin, and the two Adams, were the principal persons in this interesting scene; but they were not the only ones. Posterity will be acquainted with them all. Their celebrated names will be transmitted to it by a more fortunate pen than mine. The marble and the bronze will exhibit them to the remotest ages. At sight of them, the friend of liberty will feel his eyes filled with pleasing tears, and his heart will bound with joy. Under the bust of one of them has been written, *He took from heaven its thunder, and from tyrants their sceptre.* They will all partake with him the last words of this encomium.

Heroic region! mine advanced age will not allow me to visit thee! I shall never be present amidst the respectable persons who compose your areopagus. I shall never assist at the deliberations of your congress. I shall die without having seen the residence of toleration, of morality, and of sound laws; of virtue, and of liberty. A free and sacred land will not cover my ashes; but I could have wished it: and my last words shall be vows addressed to heaven for your prosperity.

Although America was assured that her conduct would meet with universal approbation, yet she thought it her duty to lay before the nations the motives of it. She published her manifesto*, in which we read the history of

* The English reader will easily perceive that this account is not taken literally from the original manifesto published by the Americans.

the English nation, and of its king, will offer to posterity, in speaking of them and of us, nothing but a heap of outrages and usurpations, all equally tending to the establishment of absolute tyranny in these provinces.

This history will say, that its monarch hath refused to give his consent to laws which were the most salutary and the most necessary for the public good.

That he hath transferred the assemblies to inconvenient places, at a distance from the records, in order to bring the deputies more easily into his views.

That he hath several times dissolved the chamber of the representatives, because the rights of the people were strenuously defended there.

That after the dissolution, the states have been left too long without representatives, and were consequently exposed to the inconveniences resulting from the want of an assembly.

That he hath endeavoured to put a stop to population, by making it difficult for a foreigner to be naturalized, and by requiring too much for the lands of which he granted the property.

That he hath put the judges too much under his dependence, by enacting that they should hold their offices and their salaries from him alone.

That he hath created new places, and filled those regions with a multitude of agents, who devoured our substance, and disturbed our tranquillity.

That in time of full peace he hath kept up considerable forces in the midst of us, without the consent of the legislative power.

That he hath rendered the military power independent of, and even superior to, the civil law.

That he hath settled with corrupt men to lodge armed soldiers in our houses, and to shelter them from punishment for the murders which they might commit in America; to destroy our trade in all the parts of the globe; to impose taxes on us without our consent; to deprive us in several cases of our trials by juries; to transport us beyond seas, that we might be brought to trial there; to take away our characters, suppress our best laws, and alter

the basis and the form of our government ; to suspend our own legislation, in order to give us other laws.

That he hath himself abdicated his government over the provinces of America, by declaring that we had forfeited his protection, and by waging war against us.

That he hath caused our coasts to be ravaged, our ports to be destroyed, and our people to be massacred.

That he hath compelled our fellow-citizens, taken prisoners at sea, to bear arms against their country, to become the assassins of their friends and their brethren, or to perish themselves by those beloved hands.

That he hath fomented intestine divisions amongst us, and endeavoured to excite against our peaceful inhabitants barbarous savages, accustomed to massacre, without distinction of rank, of sex, or of age, every person they met with.

That at this time mercenary and foreign armies have arrived on our shores, who were intended to consummate the work of desolation and of death.

And that a prince, whose character was thus marked by all the features of tyranny, was not fit to govern a free people.

A proceeding which dissolved the ties formed by consanguinity, by religion, and by habit, ought to have been supported by a great unanimity, and by prudent and vigorous measures. The United States of America gave themselves a confederate constitution, which added all the exterior strength of monarchy to all the interior advantages of a republican government.

Each province had an assembly formed by the representatives of the different districts, and who were entrusted with the legislative power. The executive power was vested in the president. It was his right and his duty to hear the complaints of all the citizens, to convene them when circumstances required it, to provide for the equipment and the subsistence of the troops, and to concert the operations with their chiefs. He was placed at the head of a secret committee, whose business it was to keep up a constant intercourse with the general congress. The time of his administration is limited to two years, but the laws allowed it to be prolonged.

The provinces were not obliged to give an account of their administration to the great council of the nation, although it was composed of the deputies of all the colonies. The superiority of the general congress over each particular congress was limited to what concerned policy and war.

But some people have judged that the institution of this body was not so well planned as the legislation of the provinces. It should seem, indeed, that confederate states, who emerge from the condition of subjects to rise to independence, cannot without danger entrust their delegates with an unlimited power of making peace or war. For if these were either faithless or not much enlightened, they might again subject the whole state to the same yoke from which it attempts to free itself. It seems that in the instant of a revolution, the public wishes cannot be too much known, nor too literally explained. It is undoubtedly necessary, say they, that all the measures, all the operations which concur to the common attack or defence, should be decided by the common representatives of the body of the state; but the continuation of the war, and the conditions of peace, ought to be debated in each province; and the deliberations should be transmitted to the congress by the deputies, who should submit the opinion of their provinces to the majority of votes. Lastly, it is added, that if it be right in established governments for the people to confide in the wisdom of the senate, it is necessary in a state where the constitution is forming, where the people, still uncertain of their fate, require their liberty sword in hand, that all the citizens should continually attend at the councils in the army, and in the public places, and that they should always keep a watchful eye over the representatives to whom they have entrusted their destiny.

Though these principles be generally true, it may however be answered, that it was difficult perhaps to apply them to the new republic formed by the Americans. The case is not with them as with the confederate republics we see in Europe, I mean Holland and Switzerland, which only occupy a territory of small extent, and where it is an easy matter to establish a rapid communication between

the several provinces. The same thing may be said of the confederacies of ancient Greece. These states were situated at a small distance from each other, almost entirely confined within the limits of the Peloponnesus, or within the circuit of a narrow archipelago. But the United States of America, dispersed over an immense continent, occupying in the New World a space of near fifteen degrees, separated by deserts, mountains, gulfs, and by a vast extent of coasts, cannot enjoy so speedy a communication. If congress were not empowered to decide upon political interests without the particular deliberations of each province; if upon every occasion of the least importance, and every unforeseen event, it were necessary for the representatives to receive new orders, and as it were a new power, this body would remain in a state of inactivity. The distances to be traversed, together with the length and the multiplicity of the debates, might be too frequently prejudicial to the general good.

Besides, it is never in the infancy of a constitution, and in the midst of the great commotions for liberty, that we need apprehend that a body of representatives should betray, either from corruption or weakness, the interests with which they are intrusted. The general spirit will rather be inflamed and exalted in such a body. There it is that the genius of the nation resides in all its vigour. Chosen by the esteem of their fellow-citizens, chosen at a time when every public function is dangerous, and every vote an honour; placed at the head of those who will eternally compose this celebrated areopagus, and on that account naturally induced to consider public liberty as the work of their own hands, they must be possessed with the enthusiasm of founders, whose pride it is to engrave for future centuries their names upon the frontispiece of the august monument which is erecting. The apprehensions which the favourers of the contrary system might have put upon this account, appear therefore to be ill-founded.

I will go farther still. It might happen that a people who fight for their liberty, fatigued with a long and painful struggle, and more affected with the dangers of the moment than with the idea of their future happiness, might feel their courage damped, and might one day, per-

haps, be tempted to prefer dependence and peace to a tempestuous independence, which would expose them to dangers and bloodshed. It is then that it would be advantageous to those people to have deprived themselves of the power of making peace with their oppressors, and to have vested that power in the hands of the senate which they had chosen to be the organ of their will at a time when that will was free, haughty, and courageous. It seems as if they had told their senate at the time of their institution, we raise the standard of war against our tyrants; if our arms should grow weary of the fight, if we should ever be capable of degrading ourselves so far as to sue for repose, support us against our weakness: do not attend to wishes unworthy of ourselves, which we previously disavow; and do not pronounce the name of peace till our chains shall be entirely broken.

Accordingly, if we consult the history of republics, we shall find that the multitude have almost always the impetuosity and the ardour of the first moment; but that it is only in a small number of men chosen and fit to serve as chiefs, in whom reside those constant and vigorous resolutions which proceed from a firm and certain step towards a great aim, and which are never altered, but obstinately struggle against calamities, fortune, and mankind.

War begins between the United States and England.

However this may be, and whatever side we may take in this political discussion, the Americans had not yet formed their system of government, when, in the month of March, Hopkins was carrying off from the English islands of Providence a very numerous artillery, and a great quantity of warlike stores; when at the beginning of May, Carleton drove away from Canada the provincials who were employed in reducing Quebec, in order to finish the conquest of that great possession; when in June, Clinton and Parker were so vigorously driven back upon the coasts of South America. The declaration of independence was followed by greater scenes.

Howe had succeeded the feeble Gage. It was even the new general who had evacuated Boston. Received in

Halifax on the second of April, he quitted it the tenth of June to go to Staten island, where he was successively joined by the land and sea forces which he expected; and on the 28th of August he landed without opposition upon Long island, under the protection of a fleet commanded by the admiral his brother. The Americans did not display much more vigour in the inland countries than upon the coasts. After a trifling resistance and considerable losses, they took refuge on the continent, with a facility which a conqueror, who had known how to improve his advantages, would never have given them.

The new republicans forsook the city of New York with still greater facility than they had evacuated Long island, and they had retired to Kingsbridge, where every thing seemed disposed for an obstinate resistance.

Had the English followed up their first successes with that activity which the circumstances required, the new levies which were opposed to them would infallibly have been dispersed or obliged to lay down their arms. Six weeks were allowed them to recover themselves, and they did not abandon their intrenchments till the night of the 2d of November, when they were convinced, by the motions which were made under their eyes, that their camp was going to be attacked.

Washington their chief did not choose to trust the fate of his country to an action which might have been, and which must naturally have been, decisive against the great interests he was intrusted with. He knew that delays are always favourable to the inhabitants of a country and fatal to strangers. This conviction determined him to fall back upon the Jerseys with the intention of protracting the war. Favoured by the winter, by the knowledge of the country, by the nature of the territory, which deprived discipline of part of its advantages, he might flatter himself that he should be able to cover the greatest part of this fertile province, and to keep the enemy at a distance from Pennsylvania. All of a sudden he found his colours forsaken by soldiers, who were engaged for no more than six, or even three, months, and from an army of five-and-twenty thousand men, he scarcely kept together two thou-

land five hundred, with whom he found himself very fortunate to escape beyond the Delaware.

Without losing a moment the royal troops ought to have crossed the river in pursuit of this small number of fugitives, and to have completed the dispersion of them. If the five thousand men destined for the conquest of Rhode island had gone up the river upon the ships they were on-board of, the junction of the two corps would have been made without opposition in Philadelphia itself, and the new republic would have been extinguished in the famous and interesting city which had given it birth.

The English general was perhaps censured at that time for having been too timorous and too circumspect in the operations of the field. It is however certain, that he was rash in the distribution of his winter-quarters. He settled them as if there had not been a single individual in America, who either had the power or the inclination to molest them.

This presumption emboldened the militia of Pennsylvania, of Maryland, and of Virginia, who had united for their common safety. The 25th of December they crossed the Delaware, and fell unawares upon Trentown, which was occupied by fifteen hundred of the twelve thousand Hessians who had been so basely sold to Great Britain by their avaricious master. This corps was either massacred, taken, or entirely dispersed. A week after, three English regiments were also driven out of Princes town, but not without having shewn more courage than the foreign troops in their pay. These unexpected events reduced the enemies of America in Jersey to the posts of Amboy and of Brunswick; and they were even much harassed there during the remainder of the bad season. The effect of great passions and great dangers is frequently to astonish the soul, and to plunge it in a kind of stupor which deprives it of the use of its powers. By degrees it comes to itself and recovers. All its faculties, suspended for a moment, exert themselves with greater energy. It strains all its springs, and its strength becomes equal to its situation. In a great multitude some individuals experience this effect, and it is quickly communicated to all. This revolution

had been accomplished in the confederate states, and armed men issued forth from all quarters of them.

The campaign in 1777 was opened very late. The English army despairing of making a road to Pennsylvania through the Jerseys, embarked at length on the 23d of July, and arrived by Chesapeak bay, in a country which their generals might be censured for not having invaded the preceding year. Their march was not interrupted till they came to Brandewine, where they attacked and defeated the Americans on the 11th of September, and arrived on the 30th at Philadelphia, which had been abandoned by congress on the 25th, and by a great number of the inhabitants some days sooner or later.

This conquest was attended with no consequences. The conquerors beheld nothing but hatred and devastation around them. Confined in a very circumscribed space, they met with unsurmountable obstacles in extending themselves upon an uncultivated territory. Their gold even did not furnish them with resources from the neighbouring districts, and they could only acquire their subsistence from across the seas. Wearied with a confinement which had lasted nine months, they determined to regain New York by the Jerseys; and this long and dangerous retreat was accomplished under the command of Clinton, who had succeeded Howe, with less loss than they would have suffered from a more experienced enemy.

While the English were languishing in Pennsylvania a vast scene was opening in the more northern countries of America. In the month of May 1776, Carleton had driven away the provincials from Canada, and destroyed in October the ships of war which had been constructed upon lake Champlain. This success carried Burgoyne to Ticonderago, in the month of July of the ensuing year. At his approach, the garrison of four thousand men abandoned this important post with the loss of their artillery, ammunition, and rear guard.

The English general was naturally presumptuous, and his boldness was increased by these evident signs of weakness. He had conceived the design of uniting the troops of Canada with those of New York by the shores of Hudsons bay. This project was great and daring. Had it,

succeeded it would have divided South America into two parts, and perhaps have ended the war. But in order to make it succeed, it was necessary that while one army was going down the river another should be coming up it. This plan having failed, Burgoyne ought to have perceived from the first that his enterprise was chimerical. It became more so every march. His communications became more distant and his provisions were diminishing. The courage of the Americans being revived, they assembled and closed him on all sides. At length this unfortunate army found itself surrounded on the 13th of October at Saratoga, and the nations heard with astonishment, that six thousand of the best disciplined troops of the Old Hemisphere, had laid down their arms to the husbandmen of the New Hemisphere, under the conduct of the fortunate Gates. Those who recollected that the Swedes of Charles XII, who had till then been invincible, had capitulated to the Russians, who were still in a state of barbarism, did not censure the English troops, and only blamed the imprudence of their general.

This event, so decisive in the opinion of our politicians, was attended with no greater consequences than had resulted from actions less favourable to the American arms. After three years spent in battles, devastation, and massacres, affairs were much in the same situation as they were a fortnight after the commencement of hostilities. Let us endeavour to investigate the cause of this strange singularity.

What is the reason that the English have not succeeded in subduing the confederate provinces.

ENGLAND, accustomed to stormy times in her own country, did not at first perceive all the dangerous tendency of the tempest which was rising in her distant possessions. Her troops had been a long time insulted at Boston. An authority independent of her own had been formed in Massachusetts bay; the other colonies were preparing to follow that example before administration had seriously attended to those great objects. When they were laid before parliament they excited much clamours in both houses, and there was no end to the debates. The

senate of the nation at length determined, that the country which rebelled against its decrees should be compelled by force to submit to them. But this violent resolution was carried into execution with that delay which is but too common in free states.

England was generally of opinion, that defenceless coasts, and countries which were entirely laid open, could not long resist her fleets and her armies. It did not appear to her, that this expedition would continue long enough to give the peaceful cultivators of America time to instruct themselves in the art of war. She did not take into consideration the climate, the rivers, the defiles, the woods, the morasses, the want of subsistence increasing in proportion as one advanced in the inland countries, together with an infinite number of other natural obstacles which would impede any rapid progress in a country three fourths of which were uncultivated, and which ought to be considered as a recent one.

The successes were still more retarded by the influence of moral causes.

Great Britain is the region of parties. Her kings have most generally been convinced of the necessity of abandoning the direction of affairs to the prevailing faction, by which they were commonly conducted with intelligence and vigour, because the principal agents who composed it were animated with one common interest. At that time, to the public spirit which prevails more in England than in any European government, was added the strength of faction, and that spirit of party which is perhaps the first spring of a republic, and which so powerfully agitates the soul, because it is always the effect of some passion. George III, in order to free himself from this long tutelage, composed his council of members unconnected with each other. This innovation was not attended with great inconveniences, as long as events moved on in their ordinary circle. But when the American war had complicated a machine which was already too intricate, it was perceived that it had no longer that power and that union so necessary to accomplish great things. The wheels, too much divided, wanted, as it were, one common impulse and a centre of motion. Their progression was alternately tardy and preci-

pitate. The administration resembled too much that of an ordinary monarchy, when the principle of action doth not come from the head of an active and intelligent monarch, who himself collects under his own management all the springs of government. There was no longer any harmony in the enterprises, nor was there any more in the execution of them.

A ministry without harmony and without concord was exposed to the attacks, incessantly renewed, of an adverse body of men united and compacted together. Their resolutions, whatever they might be, were opposed with ridicule and with argument. They were censured for having acted with violence against citizens at a distance; and they would have been equally censured, had they treated them with more circumspection. Even those who in parliament exclaimed the most vehemently against the treatment the Americans had met with, those who encouraged them the most to resistance, those who perhaps sent them secret succours, were as much averse from their independence, as the minister whom they were incessantly endeavouring to degrade or to render odious. If the opposition had succeeded in disgusting the prince of his confidants, or had prevailed upon him to sacrifice them on account of the clamours of the nation, the project of conquering America would still have been pursued; but with more dignity, with more strength, and with measures perhaps better adapted. But as the reduction of the provinces was not to be accomplished by them, they chose rather that this immense part of the British empire should be separated from it, than that it should remain attached to it by any other means than theirs.

The generals did not repair, by their activity, the errors of these contradictions, and of the delays which were the consequence of them. They granted too long repose to the soldiers; they wasted in deliberation the time which they should have employed in action; they marched up to new raised troops with as much precaution as they would have taken against veterans. The English who are so impetuous in their factions, display on all other occasions, a calm and cool character. They require violent passions to agitate them. When this stimulus is wanting, they cal-

culate all their motions. Then they conduct themselves according to the tenor of their character, which in general, except in the arts of imagination and taste, is universally mechanical and prudent. In war, their valour never loses sight of military principles, and leaves little to chance. They scarce ever leave upon their flanks, or in their rear, any thing that can give them uneasiness. This system hath its advantages, especially in a narrow and confined country, in a country thick set with fortresses or military posts. But in the present circumstances, and on the vast continent of America, against a people to whom one should not have allowed time to fortify themselves, nor to inure themselves to war, the perfection of the art would perhaps have been, to lay it entirely aside; to substitute to it an impetuous and rapid march, and that boldness which at once astonishes, strikes, and overthrows. It was in the first instances especially, that it would have been proper to impress the Americans, not with the terror of ravages, which irritate rather than they frighten a people armed for their liberty, but with that which arises from the superiority of talents and of arms, and which a warlike people of the Old World ought naturally to have carried into the New one. The confidence of victory would soon have been victory itself. But by too much circumspection, by too servile an attachment to principles and to rules, commanders of little skill failed in rendering that service to their country which she expected, and had a right to expect, from them.

The troops, on the other hand, did not press their officers to lead them on to action. They arrived from a country, where the cause which had obliged them to cross so many seas excited no concern. It was, in the eyes of the people, an effervescence which would have no consequences. They confounded the debates which it occasioned in parliament, with other debates, which were often of little importance. It was not talked of; and if any person happened to mention it, they appeared to be no more interested in it, than in that kind of news which, in great cities, employs the lounging hours of every day. The indifference of the nation had communicated itself to those who were to defend their rights. Perhaps even they were appre-

henfive of gaining too decifive an advantage over fellow-citizens, who had only taken up arms to prevent flavery. In all the monarchies of Europe, the foldier is only the instrument of defpotifm, and his sentiments are analogous. He thinks he belongs to the throne, and not to his country; and a hundred thoufand men in arms are nothing more than one hundred thoufand difciplined and terrible flaves. The habit even of exercifing the empire of force, to which every thing gives way, contributes to extinguish in them all idea of liberty. Finally, the difcipline, and military fubordination, which, at the command of one fingle man, puts thoufands in motion; which doth not fuffer the foldier either to fee or to ask queffions; and which, on the firft fignal, makes it a rule to kill or to die, tends completely to change in them thofe sentiments into principles, and makes them as it were the moral fyftem of their condition. It is not the fame in England. The influence of the conftitution is fo powerful, that it extends even to the troops. A man there is a citizen before he is a foldier. Public opinion agreeing with the conftitution, honours one of thefe titles, and thinks little of the other. Accordingly, we fee from the hiftory of the revolutions that have happened in this turbulent ifland, that the Englifh foldier, though inlifted for life, preserves a paffion for political liberty, the idea of which cannot be eafily conceived in our regions of flavery.

How is it poffible that the ardour which was wanting to the Britifh troops fhould have animated the Heffians, the Brunfwickers, and the other Germans, ranged under the fame ftandards, and all of them equally difatisfied with the fovereigns who had fold them, difatisfied with the prince who had purchafed them, difatisfied with the nation that paid them, and difatisfied with their comrades, who defpifed them as mercenaries? Befides, they had alfo in the enemy's camp, brothers whom they were afraid of deftroying, and by whole hands they would not have wifhed to be wounded.

The fpirit of the Britifh armies was alfo changed, in confequence of a revolution which had taken place in the manners of the nation for about fifteen or eighteen years paft. The fuccesses of the laft war; the extension commerce had received after the peace; the great acquisitions

made in the East-Indies; all these means of wealth had accumulated uninterruptedly prodigious riches in Great Britain. These treasures kindled the desire of fresh enjoyments. The great went in search of this art in foreign countries, especially in France, and brought with them the poison of it into their own country. From the men of high rank, it soon diffused itself among all orders of men. To a haughty, simple, and reserved, character, succeeded the taste for parade, dissipation, and gallantry. The travellers who had formerly visited this island, so celebrated, thought themselves under another sky. The contagion had even gained the troops; they carried into the New Hemisphere that passion they had contracted in the Old one, for play, the inclination for all the conveniencies of life, and for high living. In quitting the coasts, they should have renounced all the superfluities to which they were attached; and that taste for luxury, that ardour, so much the more violent as it was recent, did not encourage them to follow into the inland parts, men who were always ready to fall back upon them. Ye new politicians, who advance with so much confidence, that the manners have no kind of influence upon the destiny of states; that for them the measure of their grandeur is that of their riches; that the luxury of peace, and the voluptuous pursuits of the citizen, cannot weaken the effect of those great machines which are called armies, and the sensible and terrible impulse of which European discipline hath brought to so great perfection: you who, to support your opinion, turn your eyes away from the ashes of Carthage and the ruins of Rome, suspend at least your judgment at the account I am giving you, and acknowledge that there may perhaps be opportunities of success, which luxury prevents us from availing ourselves of. Acknowledge that for troops even that are brave, it has been often the first source of victory, that they had no wants. It is too easy a matter, perhaps, to have nothing but death to face. Nations corrupted by wealth have a more difficult trial to undergo; that of supporting the privation of their pleasures.

Let us add to all these reasons, that the instruments of war do not often arrive across the seas in the proper sea-

sons for action. Let us add, that the councils of George III had too much influence over military operations; which were to be carried on at so great a distance from them; and we shall then comprehend most of the obstacles which impeded the success of the ruinous efforts of the mother country against the liberty of the colonies.

Why have not the confederate provinces succeeded in driving the English from America.

BUT wherefore did not America herself repulse from her shores the Europeans who were bringing death or slavery to her?

This New World was defended by regular troops, which at first had been insisted only for three or six months, and afterwards for three years, or even for all the time hostilities might last. It was defended by citizens, who only took the field when their particular province was either invaded or threatened. Neither the standing army, nor the militia assembled for a time, breathed the military spirit. They were planters, merchants, lawyers, exercised only in the arts of peace, and led on to danger by commanders as little versed as their subalterns in the very complicated science of military actions. In this state of things, what hope was there of their acting with advantage against men grown old in discipline, trained to evolutions, skilled in tactics, and abundantly provided with all the instruments necessary for a brisk attack, and for an obstinate resistance? Enthusiasm alone could have surmounted such difficulties. But did it really exist more in the colonies than in the mother country?

The general opinion in England was, that the parliament had essentially the right of taxing all the regions which constituted a part of the British empire. At the commencement of the troubles, there were not perhaps a hundred individuals who would have called this authority in question. Nevertheless, the refusal of the Americans to acknowledge it, did not set the minds of men against them. There was no hatred entertained against them, even after they had taken up arms to support their pretensions. As the labours in the inland parts of the kingdom were not affected, and as the thunder was only

heard at a distance, every one attended peaceably to his own affairs, or devoted himself quietly to his pleasures. All of them expected, without impatience, the end of a scene, the termination of which did not indeed appear uncertain to them.

The ferment must at first have broken out with more violence in the New than in the Old Hemisphere. Hath ever the odious name of tyranny, or the pleasing word of independence, been pronounced to the nations without raising emotions in them? But was this ardour kept up? If the imaginations of men had been maintained in their first state of commotion, would it not have been the business of a rising authority to attend to the suppression of the excess of it? But, far from having boldness to restrain it, it was cowardice they had to guard against. They punished desertion with death, and stained the standard of liberty with assassinations. They refused to exchange prisoners, for fear of increasing in the troops their inclination to surrender at the first summons. They were reduced to the necessity of erecting tribunals, appointed to prosecute their generals or their lieutenants who should abandon too lightly the posts committed to their trust. It is true, an old man of fourscore years of age, whom they wanted to send back to his home, exclaimed, "My death may be useful; I shall cover with my body a younger man than I am." It is true that Putnam said to a loyalist who was his prisoner, "Return to your commander; and if he should ask you how many troops I have, tell him I have enough; that if even he should beat them, there will remain enough; and that he will experience, in the end, that I shall have enough for him, and for the tyrants whom he serves." These sentiments were heroic, but rare; and they became less common every day.

The intoxication was never general, and indeed could only be temporary. Of all the causes of energy which have produced so many revolutions on the globe, none existed in the north of America. No outrage had been committed either against religion or the laws. The blood of martyrs and of citizens had not flowed upon the scaffolds. The morals had received no insult. The manners and the

customs, none of those objects to which the people are so much attached, had been delivered up to ridicule. Arbitrary power had not dragged any inhabitant from the midst of his family and his friends, to plunge him into the horrors of a prison. Public order had not been subverted. The principles of administration had not been altered; and the maxims of government had remained always the same. The only circumstance was to know, whether the mother country had or had not the right, directly or indirectly, of laying a slight tax on the colonies; for the accumulated grievances mentioned in the manifesto arose only from this first grievance. This question, which is almost a metaphysical one, was scarce proper to raise an insurrection among the multitude, or at least to interest them strongly in a quarrel for which they saw their lands deprived of the assistances necessary to fertilize them, their harvests ravaged, and their fields covered with the dead bodies of their relations, or stained with their own blood. To these calamities, which were occasioned by the royal troops on the coast, others were soon added, still more insupportable, in the inland parts of the country.

Whenever the restlessness of the courts of London and Versailles had disturbed North America, those two powers had always drawn into their sanguinary contests the wandering inhabitants of this part of the New Hemisphere. Informed by experience how much weight these hordes of savages could throw into the scale, the English and the colonists resolved equally to employ them to their mutual destruction.

Carleton first endeavoured to put arms into the hands of these barbarians in Canada. They answered his applications with saying, "This is a dispute between a father and his children; it does not become us to interfere in this domestic quarrel."—"But if the rebels should come to attack this province, would you not assist us in repelling them?"—"Since the peace, the hatchet of war is buried forty fathom deep."—"You could certainly find it, if you were to dig for it."—"The handle is rotten, and we could make no use of it."

The United states were not more successful. "We have heard of the differences that have arisen between

"Old and New England," said the tribe of the Onondas to their deputies. "We will never take a part in contests of so atrocious a nature. A war between brothers is a thing new and unknown in these regions. Our traditions have not left us any instance of this kind. Extinguish your extravagant hatred; and may a more serene sky dispel the dark cloud that surrounds you."

The Masphis alone seemed to interest themselves in the fate of the Americans. "Here are sixteen shillings for you," said these good savages. "It is all we are worth. We intended to buy some rum with it; but we will drink water. We will go to the chase; and if we should kill any animals, we will sell their skins, and bring you the money."

But in process of time, the very active emissaries of Great Britain succeeded in bringing over to her side several of the original nations. Her interests were preferred to those of her enemies, because the distance had not allowed her subjects to commit the same outrages against the savages as they had received from their proud neighbours, and because she was both able and inclined to pay more liberally for the services she might receive from them. Under her colours these allies, whose ferocious character knew no restraint, did infinitely more mischief to the colonists settled near the mountains, than such of their fellow-citizens who had the good fortune to be settled near the borders of the ocean received from the royal troops.

These calamities fell only upon a more or less considerable number of the Americans; but they were soon all of them afflicted with an internal misfortune.

The metals, which cover the face of the whole globe, and represent all the objects of commerce, were never abundant in this part of the New World. The small quantity that was found there even disappeared at the first breaking out of hostilities. To these signs of universal convention were substituted others peculiar to these districts. Paper supplied the want of money. To give some kind of dignity to this new pledge, it was surrounded with emblems calculated to recal continually to the minds of the people the greatness of their enterprise, the inestimable value of liberty, and the necessity of a perseverance

superior to all misfortunes. The artifice did not succeed ; and these ideal riches were rejected. The more did necessity oblige them to be multiplied, the more did their discredit increase. The congress was offended with the insult done to their coin ; and they declared traitors to their country all those who should not receive it as they would have received gold.

Did not the congress then know, that authority can no more be exerted over the mind than over opinion ? Were they not sensible, that, in the present crisis, every reasonable citizen would be apprehensive of risking his fortune ? Did they not perceive, that, at the origin of the republic, they indulged themselves in acts of despotism unknown in countries that are even formed to servitude ? Could they conceal from themselves that they punished a want of confidence with the same punishment which would scarce have been merited for revolt and treason ? The congress perceived all this, but had no choice of means. Their contemptible and rejected paper was actually thirty times below its original value, when they fabricated more of it. On the 13th September 1779, there was circulating among the public to the amount of 799,744,000 livres [33,322,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] of it. The state was then indebted 188,670,525 livres [7,861,271*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.*] exclusive of the debts peculiar to each province.

The people were not indemnified for a calamity which might be called domestic, by a free intercourse with all the other parts of the globe. Great Britain had intercepted their navigation with the West-Indies, and with all the latitudes which were covered with their ships. They then declared to the world, " It is the English name which hath rendered us odious ; we solemnly abjure it. All men are our brethren. We are the friends of every nation. All flags may appear upon our coasts, and frequent our ports, without fear of insult." But this invitation, apparently so alluring, was not complied with. The states that were really commercial being apprised that North America had been obliged to contract debts at the period even of its greatest prosperity, judiciously imagined, that, in its present distress, it would be able to pay very little for what was brought to it. The French alone dared to

brave the inconveniencies of this new connection. But by the enlightened vigilance of Admiral Howe, most of the ships which they fitted out were taken before they arrived to the place of their destination, and the rest at their departure from the American shores. Of several hundred ships sent out from France, no more than twenty-five or thirty returned; and even these were of little or no benefit to their owners.

A number of privations, added to so many calamities, might have made the Americans regret their former tranquillity, and inclined them to a reconciliation with England. In vain were the people bound by the faith of oaths, and by the influence of religion, to the new government. In vain had it been endeavoured to convince them of the impossibility of negotiating safely with a mother country, in which one parliament could subvert what had been regulated by another. In vain had they been threatened with the eternal resentment of an affronted and vindictive enemy. It was possible that these distant apprehensions might not counterbalance the weight of the present calamities.

Such was the opinion of the British ministry, when they sent public agents into the New World, who were authorised to offer any terms short of independence to those very Americans, from whom, two years before, an unlimited submission had been required. There is some probability that this plan of conciliation might have been successful some months before. But at the period when the court of London sent to propose it, it was haughtily rejected, because this step appeared only to be the effect of fear and weakness. The people were already re-animated; the congress, the generals, the troops, the intelligent or bold men who in every colony had assumed the authority, all, in a word, had recovered their former spirit. This was the effect of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and the court of Versailles, which was signed on the 6th of February 1778.

France acknowledges the independence of the United States, which occasions a war with England.

HAD the English ministry reflected, they would have comprehended that the same delirium which caused them to attack their colonies, should have compelled them instantly to declare war against France. The circumspection which ought always to attend a new reign then prevailed in the councils of this crown.

Their finances were then in that state of confusion into which they had been plunged by twenty years perseverance in folly. The ruined state of their navy then raised anxiety in the breast of every citizen. Spain, already harassed with her extravagant expedition against Algiers, was then surrounded with difficulties which would have prevented her from being able to assist her allies. England might, without rashness, have flattered herself with success against the most powerful of her enemies, and might have intimidated America by victories obtained in its neighbourhood. The importance it was of to this crown, to deprive its rebellious subjects of the only support they were certain of, would have diminished the indignation excited by the violation of the most solemn treaties.

George III saw nothing of all this. The clandestine succours which the court of Versailles used to send to the provinces in arms for the defence of their rights did not open his eyes. The dock yards of this power were filled with ship builders, its arsenals were stocking with artillery, and there remained no more room in its magazines for fresh naval stores. Its harbours presented the most menacing aspect, and yet this strange infatuation still continued. To rouse the court of St. James's from its lethargy, it was necessary that Lewis XVI should cause it to be signified to them on the 14th March, that he had acknowledged the independence of the United States.

This declaration was a declaration of war. It was impossible that a nation, more accustomed to give than to take an affront, should patiently suffer that its subjects should be released from their oath of allegiance, and be raised with splendour to the rank of sovereign powers. All Europe foresaw that two nations, which had been rivals for so many centuries, were going to stain with blood

the waters of the ocean, and engage again in that terrible conflict in which public prosperity can never compensate private distress. Those in whom ambition had not extinguished every sentiment of benevolence towards their fellow creatures, previously deplored the calamities which were ready to fall upon the human race in both hemispheres.

The bloody scene, however was not yet begun, and this delay inspired some credulous persons with the hopes that peace would continue. It was not known that a fleet had sailed from Toulon with directions to attack the English in the north of America. It was not known that there were orders sent from London to drive away the French out of the East-Indies. Without being initiated in these mysteries of perfidy, which an insidious policy hath made to be considered as great strokes of state, men who were really enlightened judged that hostilities were unavoidable, and even near at hand on our own ocean. This foreseen event was brought about by an engagement between two frigates on the 17th June 1778.

Here our task becomes more and more difficult. Our sole aim is to be useful and true. Far from us be that spirit of party which fascinates and disgraces those who lead mankind, or who aspire to instruct them. Our wishes will be for our country, and we shall pay homage to justice. In whatever place, and under whatever form, virtue shall present herself to us, we shall honour her. The distinction of society and of states cannot estrange us from her, and the just and magnanimous man will everywhere be our fellow-citizen. If in the different events which we review we have the courage to blame what appears to us to deserve it, we do not seek the melancholy and idle satisfaction of dealing out indiscriminate censure. But we address ourselves to the nations and to posterity. It is our duty faithfully to transmit to them whatever may influence the public felicity. It is our duty to give them the history of the faults that are committed, in order that they may be instructed to avoid them. Should we dare to betray this noble duty, we should perhaps flatter the present generation, which is fleeting, and passeth away; but justice and truth, which are eternal, would denounce us to future generations, which would read us with contempt,

and would never pronounce our name without disdain. In this long career we have undertaken, we will be just to those who still exist, as we have been to those who are no more. If among men in power there be any who are offended with this liberty, we will not be afraid to say to them, that we are only the organs of a supreme tribunal, which is at length erected by reason upon an immoveable foundation. Every government in Europe must henceforth dread its decrees. The public opinion, which becomes more and more enlightened, and which is neither stopped nor intimidated by any thing, is perpetually attentive to nations and to courts. It penetrates into cabinets where policy is shut up : there it judges the depositaries of power, their passions, and their weakness, and, by the empire of genius and knowledge, raises itself above the governors of mankind, either to direct or to restrain them. Woe to those who either disdain this tribunal, or set it at defiance ! This apparent boldness arises only from inability. Woe to those whose talents are insufficient to bear its examination ! Let them do themselves justice, let them lay down a burthen too heavy for their feeble hands. They will at least no longer compromise themselves and the states.

France began the war with invaluable advantages. The place, the time, the circumstances, every thing she had chosen. It was not till after having made preparations at leisure, till after having brought her forces to that degree which was proper, that she shewed herself upon the field of battle. She had only to combat an enemy humbled, weakened, and discouraged, by domestic dissensions. The favour of the other nations was on her side against those imperious masters, or, as it was said, against those tyrants, of the seas.

The events seemed favourable to the wishes of all Europe. The French officers, who had former humiliations to efface, exerted themselves in brilliant actions, the remembrance of which will last for a long time. A skilful theory and an undaunted courage supplied any deficiency there might be on the point of experience. In all the private engagements they came off with glory, and most of them terminated to their advantage. The British fleet

was exposed to still greater dangers than the separate ships were. It was so ill-treated, that its total or partial destruction was apprehended, if the fleet which had reduced it to this deplorable state off Ushant had not determined, from timid orders, from odious intrigues, from the weakness of the admirals, or from all these motives combined, to quit the sea and re-enter first into port.

In the intoxication of this success, perhaps unexpected, France seemed to lose sight of her most important interests. Her principal object should have been to intercept the trade of her enemies, to deprive them of the double strength they derived from their sailors and from their riches, and thus to sap the two foundations of English greatness. Nothing was more easy to accomplish by a power long prepared for hostilities, than to intercept the trading navy, entirely off its guard, and attended with very feeble convoys. But this was neglected, and the immense riches which Great Britain expected from all parts of the globe, entered quietly into her harbours, even without the least loss.

The trade of France, on the contrary, was harassed in both hemispheres, and intercepted everywhere. Her colonies beheld the subsistence which they were expecting, with all the anxiety of want, carried off from their own coasts; and the mother country found itself deprived of fourscore or a hundred millions [from 3,333,333l. 6s. 8d. to 4,166,666l. 13s. 4d.] almost within her own view. These misfortunes certainly arose from some cause, which we will endeavour to investigate.

The French navy had for long time been unfortunate, and its numerous calamities were attributed to the defect of its constitution. Several attempts were made either to modify or to alter the regulations; but these innovations, whether good or bad, were always rejected with more or less visible disdain. At length the admirals dictated themselves in 1776, an ordinance, which, by making them absolute masters of the harbours, of the arsenals, of the docks, and of the magazines, destroyed that mutual superintendence which Lewis XIV had thought proper to establish between the officers of the navy and those of administration. From that time there was no more order,

no more responsibility, no more economy, in the ports; every thing there fell into confusion and disorder.

The new plan had still a more fatal influence. Till that period the ministry had directed their naval operations in a manner suitable to their political plans. This authority was transferred without being perceived, perhaps to those who were to carry these operations into execution; and they imperceptibly acquired the tint of their prejudices, which led them to believe that it was not by heavy and laborious escorts of the ships of the nation, or by remaining for a length of time on difficult cruizes, in order to surprise or destroy the vessels of the enemy, that a reputation was to be attained. This double duty was therefore either entirely neglected, or very ill fulfilled, on account of the general opinion prevalent at Brest, that such a service had nothing noble in it, and did not lead to any kind of glory.

It must be owned; that this prejudice is a very singular one, and entirely contrary to all the laws of society. What can have been the intention of the states in instituting this military force destined to traverse the seas? Was it only to procure rank to those who commanded or served in it? To give them an opportunity to exert a valour useless to any but themselves? To stain another element with blood, with carnage, and sea-fights? Certainly not. The warlike fleets are upon the ocean, what fortresses and ramparts are for the citizens of towns, and what national armies are for the provinces exposed to the ravages of the enemy. There are some kinds of property attached to a soil; others are created and transported by commerce, and are, as it were, wandering upon the ocean. These two species of property required defenders. Warriors, this is your duty. What should we say, if the land forces refused to protect the inhabitants of the cities, or the husbandman of the field against the enemy, or to extinguish the conflagration which threatens the harvest? Officers of the navy, you think yourselves degraded in protecting and convoying the merchantmen. But if commerce be deprived of protectors, what will become of the riches of the state, part of which you undoubtedly expect as a reward for your services? What will become, for yourselves, of

the revenues of your lands, which can only be made fruitful by trade, and by the circulation of wealth? You think yourselves degraded. What! degraded in rendering yourselves useful to your fellow-citizens? What are then all the orders of the state, to whom government hath intrusted some portion of the public strength, but the protectors and the defenders of the citizen and his fortune? Your post is upon the seas, as that of the magistrate is upon the tribunals, that of the land officer and of the soldier in the camps, that of the monarch upon the throne, where he is only placed upon a more elevated situation, in order that his prospect may be extended to a greater distance, and that he may behold at one view all those who require his protection or his defence. You aspire to glory. Learn that glory is everywhere to be obtained by serving the state. The ancient Romans were likewise undoubtedly attached to glory, and yet the honour of having preserved one single citizen in Rome was preferred to that of having destroyed a multitude of enemies. Do you not perceive, that in saving the trading ships you save the wealth of the state? Yes, your valour is brilliant; it is known to all Europe, as well as to your own country; but what is it to your fellow-citizens that it hath been displayed on a splendid occasion, that it hath taken one of the enemy's ships, or covered the waves of the ocean with wrecks and ruins, if you suffer all the vessels which conveyed the riches of your country to be either taken or destroyed; if, in the very port to which you return victorious, a multitude of desolated families deplore the subversion of their fortune? You will not hear the exclamations of victory on your arrival. All will be silent, and plunged in consternation; and your exploits will serve no other purpose but to swell the accounts of the courts, and to fill those public papers which, being invented to amuse idleness, give glory only for a day, when that glory is not engraved in the hearts of the citizens by the remembrance of some real service done to the country.

The maxims adopted at Portsmouth were very different. There the dignity of commerce was felt and respected. It was considered as a duty, as well as an honour, to de-

send it; and events decided, which of the two navies had the properest ideas of their functions.

Great Britain had just experienced some very humiliating adversities in the New World, and it was threatened with greater disasters by a still more powerful enemy in the Old one. This alarming situation filled the minds of all men with mistrust and uncertainty. The national riches came home safe, and their enormous mass was increased by those of the rival power; public credit was instantly revived; expectations were renewed; and this people, who with satisfaction were looked upon as overcome, recovered and sustained their usual pride.

On the other hand, the French ports were filled with lamentations. A degrading and ruinous inactivity succeeded to that activity which gave them splendour and riches. The indignation of the merchants communicated itself to the whole nation. The first moments of success are the moments of intoxication, which seem either to conceal or to justify the faults committed. But misfortune gives greater severity to opinion. The nation then attends more closely to those by whom they are governed, and demands from them, with arrogant freedom, an account of the power and authority that is intrusted to them. The councils of Lewis XVI were accused of derogating from the majesty of the first power on the globe, by disavowing in the face of universe, the succour which they were incessantly sending clandestinely to the Americans. They were accused of having, either by a ministerial intrigue, or by the influence of some obscure agents, engaged the state in a ruinous war, at a time when they ought to have been employed in repairing the springs of government, in remedying the tedious disorders of a reign, the latter half of which had been mean, feeble, divided between depredations and shame, between the baseness of vice and the convulsions of despotism. They were accused of having provoked a rupture by an insidious policy, to have enveloped their meaning in speeches unworthy of France, and to have employed, with regard to England, the language of a timorous boldness, which seemed to deny the projects that were formed, and the sentiments they had in their hearts; a language which can

only degrade the person who makes use of it, without being able to deceive him to whom it is addressed; and which dishonours, while the dishonour it brings along with it can neither be useful to the ministry nor to the state. How much more noble would it have been to have said with all the frankness of dignity: "Englishmen, you have abused your victory. This is the moment to be just, or else it will be that of revenge. Europe is tired of bearing with tyrants. She at length resumes her rights. Henceforth choose either equality or war." It is thus that Richelieu would have spoken; that Richelieu, whom every citizen ought indeed to detest, because he was a sanguinary assassin, and that in order to become a despot, he put all his enemies to death with the ax of the executioner; but the nation and the state must revere him as a minister, because he was the first who apprized France of her dignity, and ascribed to her in Europe the rank which belonged to her power. It is thus that Lewis XIV would have spoken to them, who during forty years shewed himself worthy of the age he lived in, whose very faults were always mixed with grandeur, and who, even in a state of dejection and misfortune, never degraded himself or his people. A great character is required to govern a great nation. More especially, there must be none of those spirits that are cold and indifferent from levity, for whom absolute authority is no more than an amusement, who leave great interests to the effects of chance, and who are more employed in preserving power than in making use of it. It is further asked, why men who had all the power of the state in their hands, and who had only to command in order to be obeyed, have suffered themselves to be forestalled in all the seas by an enemy whose constitution necessarily produces delays? Why did they put themselves, by an inconsiderate treaty, into the shackles of congress, which might itself have been kept independent by plentiful and regular subsidies? Lastly, why did not they secure the revolution, by keeping constantly upon the northern coasts of the New World a squadron to protect the colonies, and at the same time to make our alliance be respected? But Europe, whose eyes are fixed upon us, beholds a great design, and no concerted

measures ; it beholds in our arsenals and in our ports immense preparations, and no execution ; it beholds formidable fleets, and this equipment rendered almost useless ; it beholds boldness and valour in individuals, effeminacy and irresolution in commanders ; every thing which announces on one hand the awful power of a great people, and on the other, every thing which announces the weakness and delay which arise from character and from the nature of the views.

It is by this striking contrast between our projects and our measures, between our means and the spirit which animates them, that the English genius, astonished for a moment, hath recovered its vigour ; and it is a problem which Europe cannot solve, whether in declaring for America, we have not ourselves raised the strength of England.

Such are the complaints which are heard on all sides, and which we are not afraid of collecting here, and of laying before the eyes of authority, if it should deign to listen to, or to read, them.

Lastly, philosophy, whose first sentiment is the desire of seeing all governments equitable, and all people happy, in examining this alliance of a monarchy with a people who defend their liberty, endeavours to discover the motive of it. It perceives too clearly that the happiness of mankind hath no concern in it. It imagines, that, if the court of Versailles had been determined by the love of justice, they would have mentioned in the first article of the convention with America, that "all people who are oppressed have a right to rise against their oppressors." But this maxim, which constitutes one of the laws of England, which a king of Hungary, upon ascending the throne, ventured to make one of the constituent principles of the state, and which Trajan, one of the greatest princes who ever ruled over the earth, adopted, when in presence of the Roman people assembled, he said to the first officer of the empire : "I give you up my sword to defend me while I shall be just, and to fight against me and to punish me if I should become a tyrant." This maxim is too foreign to our feeble and corrupt governments ; where it is the duty of the people to suffer, and where the oppressed man

should be apprehensive of feeling his misfortune, for fear he should be punished for it as a crime.

But it is particularly against Spain that the most bitter complaints are directed. She is censured for her blindness, her irresolution, her delays, sometimes even for her want of fidelity ; but all these accusations are groundless.

Some politicians imagined, when they beheld France engaging without necessity in a naval war, that this crown thought itself sufficiently powerful to separate the dominion of Great Britain, without sharing with an ally the honour of this important revolution. We will not examine whether the spirit which prevailed in the cabinet of Versailles authorized this conjecture. It is now known, that this crown, which since the beginning of the troubles had given secret assistance to the Americans, watched the propitious moment for declaring openly in their favour. The event of Saratoga appeared to furnish the most favourable opportunity to propose to his catholic majesty to join in the common cause. Whether this prince then thought that the liberty of the United States was contrary to his interests ; whether the resolution appeared to him to be precipitate ; or whether, in a word, other political objects required his whole attention, he refused to accede to this proposal. His character prevented any further solicitations. Since those first attempts he was so little troubled about this great affair, that it was without giving him any previous notice, that the court of Versailles caused it to be signified to that of St. James's, that they had acknowledged the independence of the confederate provinces.

In the meanwhile the land and sea forces which Spain had employed in the Brazils against the Portuguese were returned. The rich fleet she expected from Mexico had entered into her ports. The treasures which were coming to her from Peru and from her other possessions were in safety. This power was free from any anxiety, and mistress of her own operations, when she aspired to the glory of introducing peace into both hemispheres. Her mediation was accepted, both by France, whose boldness had not been followed by those happy consequences she had

expected from it, and by England, who might be apprehensive of having a new adversary to contend with.

*Spain declares
for France.*

CHARLES III supported with dignity the magnanimous part he had undertaken. He declared that arms should be laid aside; that each of the belligerent powers should be maintained in the possessions they might occupy at the period of the convention; that a congress should be formed, in which the several pretensions should be discussed; and that no new attack should be commenced without the previous notice of a twelvemonth.

This monarch was aware that this arrangement would give to Great Britain the felicity of reconciliation with her colonies, or at least would make them purchase by great advantages for her trade the sacrifice of the ports which she occupied in the midst of them. Nor was he ignorant of his offending the dignity of the king, his nephew, who had engaged to maintain the United States in the entire possession of their territories. But he would be just; and without setting aside all personal considerations it is impossible to be so.

This plan of conciliation was displeasing to the court of Versailles; and the only hope they had was, that it would be rejected at London, as indeed it was. England could not resolve to acknowledge the Americans *ipso facto* independent, although they were not invited to the conferences that were going to be opened; although France was not allowed to negotiate for them; although their interests were only to be supported by a mediator, who was not attached to them by any treaty, and who, perhaps, in secret, did not wish them to prosper, and although her refusal threatened her with an additional enemy.

It is in such a situation, when pride elevates the soul above the suggestions of fear, that nothing appears formidable, except the shame of receiving the law; and that there is no hesitation in choosing between ruin and dishonour: it is then that the greatness of a nation displays itself. I acknowledge, however, that men, accustomed to judge of the event, consider great and perilous revolutions

as acts of heroism or of folly, according to the good or ill success that hath attended them. If, therefore, I should be asked, what name will be given a few years hence to the firmness which the English shewed on this occasion? I shall answer, that I know not: as to that which they deserve I know very well. I know that the annals of the world rarely present to us the august and majestic spectacle, of a nation which prefers the giving up of its duration to the loss of its glory.

No sooner had the British ministry explained themselves, than the court of Madrid took the part of that of Versailles, and consequently that of the Americans, in the contest. Spain had then sixty-three vessels of the line, and six more upon the stocks. France had fourscore and eight upon the docks. The United states had but twelve frigates, but a great number of privateers.

To so many forces united, England had only ninety-five ships of the line to oppose, and three-and-twenty upon the stocks. The other sixteen which were seen in her ports were unfit for service, and they had been converted to the purpose of ships for receiving prisoners, or into hospital ships. Thus inferior in the instruments of war, this power was still more so in the means of employing them upon service. Her domestic dissensions contributed still more to render ineffectual the resources she had remaining. It is the nature of governments that are truly free, to be agitated in times of peace. It is by these intestine commotions that the minds of men preserve their energy, and the perpetual remembrance of the rights of the nation. But in time of war it is necessary that every ferment should cease, that hatred should be extinguished, and that interests should be blended, and made subservient to each other. It happened quite otherwise in the British islands; for the disturbances in them had never been more violent. Opposite claims were never supported on any occasion with less moderation. The general good was insolently disregarded by all factions. Those houses, in which the most important questions had formerly been discussed, with eloquence, strength, and dignity, resounded only with the clamours of rage, gross insults, and altercations, as prejudicial as they were indecent. The few persons who might

be called citizens loudly exclaimed for a new Pitt, a minister, who like him had "neither relations nor friends;" but this extraordinary man did not appear. And indeed it was generally believed that this nation would fall, notwithstanding the haughtiness of their character, notwithstanding the experience of their admirals, notwithstanding the boldness of their seamen, and notwithstanding the energy which a free people must acquire in the disturbances they experience.

But the sway of chance is very extensive. Who knows in favour of which party the elements will declare themselves? A gust of wind snatches away victory, or gives it. A cannon shot disconcerts a whole army by the death of the general. Signals are either not well understood, or not obeyed. Experience, courage, and skill, are counteracted by ignorance, by jealousy, by treason, and by the certainty of impunity. A fog arising, covers both the enemies, and either separates or confounds them. A calm and a storm are equally favourable or disadvantageous. The forces are divided by the unequal celerity of the ships. The opportunity is lost, either by pusillanimity, which postpones, or by rashness, which hastens, an engagement. Plans may have been formed with prudence, but they may remain without effect, by the want of harmony in the evolutions for carrying them into execution. An inconsiderate command from court may decide the misfortune of a day. The disgrace or death of a minister alters the projects. Is it possible that a close union can long subsist between confederates of such opposite characters, as the French, who are passionate, disdainful, and volatile, the Spaniards, who are slow, haughty, jealous, and cold, and the Americans, who have constantly their looks turned towards the mother country, and who would rejoice at the disasters of their allies, if they were compatible with their own independence? Will it be long before these nations, whether they act separately or in concert, reciprocally accuse, complain, and are at variance with each other? Will not their greatest hope be, that repeated strokes of adversity would only at most plunge them again into the humiliating state from whence they wished to emerge, and confirm the dominion of the seas to Great Britain; while one or two considerable defeats would for ever re-

move this ambitious people from the rank of the first power of this hemisphere?

Who can therefore decide; who can even foresee what will be the event? France and Spain united have the most powerful means in their favour; England hath the art of managing her own: France and Spain have their treasures, England hath a great national credit. On one hand, are the multitude of men, and the number of troops; on the other, the superiority in the art of conducting ships, and of subduing the sea in engagements. Here there is impetuosity and valour; there valour and experience. On one hand, the activity which absolute monarchy may give to the measures; on the other, the vigour and the energy of liberty. One party is stimulated by resentment for losses, and by a long continued series of outrages they have to avenge; the other, by the recollection of a recent glory, and by their having the sovereignty of America, as well as that of the ocean, to preserve. The two allied nations have the advantage which is derived from the union of two immense powers; but at the same time the inconvenience which results from this very union, by the difficulty even of preserving harmony and concord, either in the plans or in the disposal of their forces. England is abandoned to herself; but having nothing but her own forces to direct, she hath the advantage of unity in her designs; of a more certain, and perhaps more speedy, combination of ideas. She can with greater facility regulate at one view her plans of attack and defence.

In order to have an exact idea of things, one ought also to examine the different energy which may be communicated to the rival nations by a war, which on one side is no more in several respects than a war of kings and ministers; and on the other, a really national war, in which the greatest interests of England are concerned, a commerce, which constitutes her riches; an empire, and a glory, which compose her greatness.

Finally, if we consider the spirit of the French nation, in contrast with that of the nation she is at war with, it will be found that the ardour of the French is perhaps equally ready to be excited and to be extinguished; that their hopes are very sanguine at the beginning, and that they despair of every thing as soon as they are stopped by any obstacle; that by their character they require the en-

thufiasm of fuccefs, in order to obtain frefh advantages. The Englifh, on the contrary, lefs prefumptuous at firft, notwithstanding their natural boldnefs, know how to ftruggle courageoufly, to be elevated in proportion to the increafe of danger, and to acquire ftadinefs by difgrace: like the fturdy oak, to which Horace compares the Romans, which, though cut by the ax and mutilated by iron, revives under the ftrokes which it receives, and acquires new vigour even from its wounds.

History informs us, moreover, that few leagues have ever divided the fpoils of the nation againft which they had been formed. Athens triumphant over Perfia; Rome faved from Annibal; in modern times, Venice, preferved from the famous league of Cambray; and even in our days, Pruffia, which by the genius of one fingle man hath held out againft all Europe; all thefe examples authorife us to fufpend our judgment refpecting the ifue of the prefent war.

What ought to be the policy of the houfe of Bourbon fhould it be victorious.

BUT, let us fuppose that the houfe of Bourbon fhall have obtained all the advantages they may. flatter themfelves with, what conduct ought they to purfue?

France is, in every point of view, the empire the moft ftroingly conftituted of any one the remembrance of which is preferved in the annals of the world. Spain, though not to be compared with her, is likewife a ftate of great weight, and her means of profterity are increafing daily. The principal care of the houfe of Bourbon, then, fhould be, to induce their neighbours to overlook the advantages which they derive from nature or from art, or which they have acquired by events. If they fhould endeavour to increafe their fuperiority, the alarm would become general, and people would think themfelves threatened with univerfal flavery. It is perhaps rather extraordinary, that the nations have not thwarted her projects againft England. This fupinenefs muft have been occafioned by the refentment which the injuflice and the haughtinefs of that fuperb ifland have excited in all parts. But hatred is fufpended when intereft is concerned. It is poffible, Europe may judge the weakening of Great Britain in the New and in the Old Hemifphere to be contrary

to her own security ; and that, after having enjoyed the spectacle of the humiliations and the dangers of that proud and tyrannical power, she may at length take up arms in her defence. Should this happen, the courts of Versailles and Madrid would find themselves disappointed in the hopes which they had conceived, of acquiring a decided preponderance upon the globe. These considerations should determine them to urge on the attacks, and not to leave time to a provident, or perhaps only a jealous, policy to make fresh plans. Let them especially stop in time, and let not an immoderate desire of lowering their common enemy blind them with regard to their true interests.

The United states have openly discovered the project of drawing all North America into their confederation. Several steps, and particularly that of soliciting Canada to rebellion, must have induced an opinion that it was likewise the desire of France. Spain may be suspected of having equally adopted this idea.

The conduct of the provinces which have shaken off the yoke of Great Britain is simple, and such as one would expect. But would not their allies be deficient in foresight, if they had really the same system ? The New Hemisphere must one day be detached from the Old. This great evulsion is prepared in Europe by the ferment and by the clash of opinions ; by the overthrow of our rights, which constituted our courage ; by the luxury of our courts, and the misery of our country places ; by the everlasting hatred there is between effeminate men who possess every thing, and robust, and even virtuous, men who have nothing to lose but their lives. It is prepared in America, by the increase of population, of cultures, of industry, and of knowledge. Every thing is tending towards this separation, both the progress of evil in one world, and the progress of good in another.

But can it be suitable to France and Spain, whose possessions in the New Hemisphere are an inexhaustible source of wealth, can it be suitable to them to hasten this division ? Yet this is what would happen, if the whole northern part of those regions were subject to the same laws, or connected by one common interest.

Scarce would the liberty of this vast continent be confirmed, than it would become the asylum of all the intri-

guing, seditious, branded, or rained, men who are seen amongst us. Neither agriculture, the arts, nor commerce, would be the resource of refugees of this character. A less laborious and more turbulent life would be necessary for them. This turn of mind, equally averse from labour and rest, would be disposed to conquests; and a passion which is so seducing would readily subdue the first colonists, diverted from their ancient labours by a long war. The new people would have finished their preparations for invasion before the report of them could have reached our climates. They would choose their enemies, their field of battle, and the moment of victory. Their attacks would always fall upon defenceless seas, or upon coasts taken by surprise. In a short time the southern provinces would become the prey of the northern ones, and would compensate, by the richness of their productions, for the mediocrity of those of the latter. Perhaps even the possessions of our absolute monarchies would endeavour to enter into the confederation of free people, or would detach themselves from Europe, to belong only to themselves.

The measures which the courts of Madrid and Versailles ought to pursue, if they are at liberty to choose, is to leave subsisting in the northern part of America two powers which shall watch over, restrain, and balance, each other. Then ages will elapse before England, and the republics formed at her expence, will be united. This reciprocal mistrust will prevent them from undertaking any thing at a distance; and the establishment of other nations in the New World will enjoy that state of tranquillity which hitherto hath been so much disturbed.

It is even probable that this order of things would be most suitable to the confederate provinces. Their respective limits have not been regulated. A great jealousy prevails between the countries of the north and those of the south. Political principles vary from one river to another. Great animosities are observed to subsist between the citizens of a town and the members of a family. Each of them will be desirous of removing from themselves the oppressive burden of the public expences and debts. An infinite number of seeds of division are universally brooding in the heart of the United states. When once all dangers were removed, how would it be possible to prevent the breaking

out of so many discontents? How would it be possible to keep attached to the same centre so many deluded and exasperated minds? Let the real friends of America reflect upon this, and they will find, that the only way to prevent disturbances among the people, would be to leave upon their frontiers a powerful rival, always disposed to avail itself of their dissensions.

Peace and security are necessary for monarchies; agitation and a formidable enemy for republics. Rome stood in need of Carthage: and he who destroyed the liberty of the Romans was neither Sylla nor Cæsar; it was the first Cato, when his narrow and stern system of politics deprived Rome of a rival, by kindling in the senate those flames which reduced Carthage to ashes. Venice herself, perhaps, would have lost her government and her laws four hundred years ago, if she had not had at her gates, and almost under her walls, powerful neighbours, who might become her enemies or her masters.

BUT according to this system, to what degree of felicity, splendour, and strength, can the confederate provinces attain in process of time? *What idea must be formed of the thirteen confederated provinces.*

In this place, to form a proper judgment, let us begin by setting aside that interest which all men, slaves not excepted, have taken in the generous efforts of a nation, which exposed itself to all calamities in order to be free. The name of liberty is so alluring, that all those who fight for it are sure of obtaining our secret wishes in their favour. Their cause is that of the whole human race, and becomes our own. We avenge ourselves of our oppressors, by venting at least freely our hatred against foreign oppressors. At the noise of these chains that are breaking, it seems to us that ours are going to become lighter; and for a few moments we think we breathe a purer air, when we learn that the universe reckons some tyrants less. Besides, these great revolutions of liberty are lessons to despots. They warn them not to reckon upon too long a continuance of the people's patience, and upon eternal impunity. So, where society and the laws avenge themselves of the crimes of individuals, the good may hope that the punishment of the guilty may prevent the

commission of fresh crimes. Terror sometimes supplies the place of justice with regard to the robber, and of conscience with regard to the assassin. Such is the source of the great concern we take in every war for liberty. Such hath been that with which the Americans have inspired us. Our imaginations have been heated in their favour. We have taken a part in their victories and their defeats. The spirit of justice, which delights in compensating former calamities by future happiness, is pleased with the idea, that this part of the New World cannot fail to become one of the most flourishing countries on the globe. It is even supposed that Europe may one day find her masters in her children. Let us venture to resist the torrent of opinion, and that of public enthusiasm. Let us not suffer ourselves to be misled by imagination, which embellishes every thing, and by sentiment, which delights in forming illusions, and which realizes every hope. It is our duty to combat all prejudices, even those which are most consonant to the wishes of our hearts. Above all things, it behoves us to be true, and not to betray that pure and upright conscience which presides over our writings, and dictates our judgments. At this moment, perhaps, we shall not be believed; but a bold conjecture, which is confirmed at the end of several centuries, does more honour to the historian, than a long series of facts, the truth of which cannot be contested: and I do not write for my contemporaries alone, who will only survive me a small number of years. When a few more revolutions of the sun are passed, both they and I shall be no more. But I deliver up my ideas to posterity and to time. It is theirs to judge me.

The space occupied by the thirteen republics, between the mountains and the sea, is no more than sixty-seven sea leagues; but their extent upon the coast, in a direct line, is three hundred and forty-five, from the river of *Sancta Crux* to that of *Savannah*.

The lands in that region are almost generally bad, or at least indifferent.

Scarce any thing but maize grows in the four most northern colonies. The only resource of the inhabitants is fishing, the annual produce of which doth not amount to more than 6,000,000 of livres [250,000l.]

Corn is the principal support of the provinces of New

York, the Jerseys, and Pennsylvania. But the soil hath degenerated so rapidly, that an acre, which formerly yielded sixty bushels of wheat, very seldom produces even twenty at present.

Though the lands of Maryland and of Virginia be much superior to all the rest, yet they cannot be deemed extremely fertile. The ancient plantations yield no more than one third of the tobacco which was formerly gathered. It is not possible to make any new ones; and the planters have been reduced to the necessity of turning their labours towards other objects.

North Carolina produces some grain, but of so inferior a quality, as to be sold in all markets twenty-five or thirty per cent. cheaper than the others.

The soil of South Carolina and of Georgia is perfectly even, as far as fifty miles from the ocean. The excessive rains which fall there, not finding any outlet, form numerous morasses, where rice is cultivated to the great detriment of the freemen and of the slaves employed in this culture. In the intervening spaces between these large bodies of water, so frequently met with, an inferior kind of indigo grows, which must be transplanted every year. In the elevated part of the country nothing is to be found except barren lands and frightful rocks, intersected at great distances by pasture grounds of the nature of rushes.

The English government, convinced that North America would never enrich them by its natural productions, employed the powerful incentive of gratuities, in order to produce in that part of the New World flax, vines, and silk. The poorness of the soil disconcerted the first of these views, the defect of the climate prevented the success of the second, and the want of hands did not permit the third to be pursued. The society established in London for the encouragement of arts was not more fortunate than administration. Their benefactions did not bring forth any of the objects which they had proposed to the activity and industry of those countries.

Great Britain was obliged to be contented with selling every year to the countries we are speaking of to the amount of about 50,000,000 livres [2,083,333l. 6s. 8d.] of merchandize. Those by whom they were consumed delivered to her exclusively their indigos, their iron, their

tobacco, and their pottries. They also delivered to her all the money and rough materials which they had received from the rest of the globe in exchange for their grain, their fish, their rice, and their salt provisions.

The balance, however, was always so unfavourable to them, that, at the beginning of the troubles, the colonies were indebted one hundred and twenty, or one hundred and thirty, millions of livres [from 5,000,000*l.* to 5,416,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] to the mother country; and they had no specie in circulation.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, there had been successively formed in the midst of the thirteen provinces a population of two millions nine hundred eighty-one thousand six hundred and seventy-eight persons, including four hundred thousand negroes. New inhabitants were constantly driven there by oppression and intoleration. The unfortunate have been deprived of this refuge by war; but peace will restore it to them again; and they will resort there in greater numbers than ever. Those who shall go there with plans of cultivation, will not have all the satisfaction they may expect, because they will find all the good, and even the indifferent, lands occupied, and that scarce any thing remains to offer them, except barren lands, unwholesome morasses; or steep mountains. The emigrations will be more favourable to manufacturers and to artists, though perhaps they will gain nothing by changing their country and their climate.

It cannot be determined without rashness what will one day be the population of the United States. This calculation, generally very difficult, becomes impracticable in a region where the lands degenerate very rapidly, and where re production is not in proportion to the labours and expenses bestowed upon them. It will be a considerable thing, if ten millions of men can ever find a certain subsistence in these provinces, and even then the exports will be reduced to little or nothing: but internal industry will supply the place of foreign industry. The country will nearly be able to supply its own wants, provided the inhabitants know how to be happy by economy and in mediocrity.

People in North America, let the example of all the nations which have preceded you, and especially that of the mother country, serve as a lesson to you. Dread the in-

fluence of gold, which, with luxury, introduces corruption of manners and contempt of the laws. Dread too unequal repartition of riches, which indicates a small number of wealthy citizens, and a multitude of citizens plunged in misery; from whence arises the insolence of the former, and the degradation of the latter. Keep yourselves free from the spirit of conquest. The tranquillity of an empire diminishes in proportion as it extends itself. Have arms to defend yourselves, but not to attack. Search for affluence and health in labour; for prosperity, in the cultivation of the lands, and in the manufactures of industry; for strength, in good manners and in virtue. Encourage the prosperity of the arts and sciences, which distinguish the civilized man from the savage. Attend, above all things, to the education of your children. Be convinced, that from public schools come forth enlightened magistrates, valiant and well-informed officers, good fathers, good husbands, good brothers, good friends, and honest men. Wherever depravity of manners is observed among the youth, the nation is upon its decline. Let liberty have a firm and unalterable basis in the wisdom of your constitutions, and let it be the everlasting cement which connects your provinces together. Establish no legal preference between the modes of divine worship. Superstition is everywhere innocent, where it is neither protected nor persecuted; and may your duration, if possible, be long as that of the world!

May this wish be accomplished, and console the present expiring race with the hopes that a better will succeed to it! But waving the consideration of future times, let us take a view of the result of three memorable ages. Having seen in the beginning of this work the state of misery and ignorance in which Europe was plunged in the infancy of America; let us examine to what state the conquest of the New World hath led and advanced those that made it. This was the design of a book undertaken with the hopes of being useful; if the end be answered, the author will have discharged his duty to the age he lives in, and to society.

BOOK XIX.

WE are advancing in a career upon which we should not have entered without knowing the extent and the difficulties of it, and which we should several times have quitted, had we not been supported by motives which always make us forget the disproportion between our powers and the experiment. In the event of a conflagration, we sometimes attempt and accomplish things which would depress our courage, were it not stimulated by the danger, and which astonish it when the danger is over. After a battle, either won or lost, a military man said at the sight of a mountain which he had climbed up in order to reach the enemy: who would ever have done that, if there had not been a musket-shot to receive? I was certainly animated with the same sentiment when I began this work, and it must undoubtedly animate me still since I continue.

We have first described the state of Europe before the discovery of the East and West Indies.

After this we have pursued the uncertain, tyrannical, and sanguinary, progress of the settlements formed in these distant regions.

It now remains to unfold the influence which the intercourse established with the New World has had upon the opinions, government, industry, arts, manners, and happiness, of the Old. Let us begin by religion.

Religion. HAD man uninterruptedly enjoyed complete felicity, had the earth satisfied of itself all the variety of his wants, it may be presumed that much time would have elapsed before the sentiment of admiration and gratitude would have turned towards the gods, the attention of that being naturally ungrateful. But a barren soil did not answer to his labours. The torrents ravaged the fields which he had cultivated. A burning sky destroyed his harvests. He experienced famine; he became acquaint-

ed with disease ; and he endeavoured to find out the cause of his misery.

To explain the mystery of his existence, of his happiness, and of his misfortune, he invented different systems equally absurd. He peopled the universe with good and evil spirits ; and such was the origin of polytheism, the most ancient and the most universal of all religions. From polytheism arose manicheism, the vestiges of which will last perpetually, whatever may be the progress of reason. Manicheism simplified, engendered deism ; and in the midst of this diversity of opinions there arose a class of men mediators between heaven and earth.

Then the regions of the earth were covered with altars : in one place the hymn of joy resounded, while in another were heard the complaints of pain ; then recourse was had to prayer and to sacrifice, the two natural modes of obtaining favour, and of deprecating anger. The harvest was offered up ; the lamb, the goat, and the bull, were slain ; and the holy sod was even stained with the blood of man.

In the meanwhile the good man was often seen in adversity, while the wicked, and even the impious man prospered ; and then the doctrine of immortality was suggested. The souls, freed from the body, either circulated among the different beings of nature, or went into another world to receive the reward of their virtues, or the punishment of their crimes. But it is a problematical circumstance, whether man became better on this account. It is certain, however, that from the instant of his birth to that of his death, he was tormented with the fear of invisible powers, and reduced to a much more wretched state than that which he had before enjoyed.

Most legislators have availed themselves of this propensity of the mind, to govern the people, and still more to enslave them. Some have asserted, that they held from heaven the right of commanding ; and thus was theocracy or sacred despotism established, the most cruel and the most immoral of all legislations ; that in which man, proud, malevolent, interested, and vicious with impunity, commands man from God ; that in which there is nothing just or unjust, but what is either agreeable or displeasing to him, or that Supreme Being with whom he communicates, and whom he causes to speak according to his passions, in which it is a

crime to examine his orders, and impiety to oppose them ; in which contradictory revelations are substituted to reason and conscience, which are reduced to silence by prodigies or by enormous crimes; in which the nations, in a word, cannot have any ideas concerning the rights of man, respecting what is good and what is evil, because they search for the foundation of their privileges and of their duties, only in sacred writings, the interpretation of which is denied to them.

If this kind of government had a more sublime origin in Palestine, still it was not more exempt than anywhere else from the calamities which necessarily arise from it.

Christianity succeeded the Jewish institution. The subjection that Rome, mistress of the world, was under to the most savage tyrants ; the dreadful miseries, which the luxury of a court and the maintenance of armies had occasioned throughout this vast empire under the reigns of the Neros ; the successive irruptions of the barbarians, who dismembered this great body ; the loss of provinces, either by revolt or invasion ; all these natural evils had already prepared the minds of men for a new religion, and the changes in politics must necessarily have induced an innovation in the form of worship. In paganism, which had existed for so many ages, there remained only the fables to which it owed its origin, the folly or the vices of its gods, the avarice of its priests, and the infamy and licentious conduct of the kings who supported them. Then the people, despairing to obtain relief from their tyrants upon earth, had recourse to heaven for protection.

Christianity appeared, and afforded them comfort, at the same time that it taught them to suffer with patience. While the tyranny and licentiousness of princes tended to the destruction of paganism as well as to that of the empire, the subjects, who had been oppressed and spoiled, and who had embraced the new doctrines, were completing its ruin by the examples they gave of those virtues, which always accompany the zeal of new-made proselytes. But a religion that arose in the midst of public calamity must necessarily give its preachers a considerable influence over the unhappy persons who took refuge in it. Thus the power of the clergy commenced, as it were, with the gospel.

From the remains of pagan superstitions and philosophic

sects, a code of rites and tenets was formed, which the simplicity of the primitive christians sanctified with real and affecting piety; but which at the same time left the seeds of debates and controversies, from whence arose a variety of passions disguised under, and dignified with, the name of zeal. These dissensions produced schools, doctors, a tribunal, and a hierarchy. Christianity had begun to be preached by a set of fishermen, destitute of every knowledge but that of the gospel; it was entirely established by bishops who formed the church. After this it gained ground by degrees, till at length it attracted the notice of the emperors. Some of these tolerated christianity, either from motives of contempt or humanity; others persecuted it. Persecution hastened its progress, for which toleration had paved the way. Connivance and proscription, clemency and rigour, were all equally advantageous to it. The sense of freedom, so natural to the human mind, induced many persons to embrace it in its infancy, as it has made others reject it since it has been established. This spirit of independence, rather adapted to truth than to novelty, would necessarily have induced a multitude of persons of all ranks to become converts to christianity, if even the characters it bore had not been calculated to inspire veneration and respect.

Paganism, unmasked by philosophy, and brought into discredit by the fathers of the church, with a sufficient number of temples, but with priests who were not rich, sank from day to day, and gave way to the new form of worship. This penetrated into the hearts of the women by devotion, which is so naturally allied to tenderness, and into the minds of children, who are fond of prodigies, and even of the most rigid morality. Thus it was introduced into courts, where every thing which can become a passion is certain of finding access. A prince, who bathed in the blood of his family, had, as it were, fallen asleep in the arms of impunity; a prince, who had great crimes and great weaknesses to expiate, embraced christianity, which forgave him every thing on account of his zeal, and to which he gave up every thing, in order to be freed from his remorse.

Constantine, instead of uniting the priesthood to the crown, when he was converted to christianity, as they

had been united in the persons of the pagan emperors, granted to the clergy such a share of wealth and authority, and afforded them so many means of future aggrandizement, that these blind concessions produced an ecclesiastical despotism entirely new.

Profound ignorance was the most certain support of this ascendancy over the minds of men. The pontiffs of Rome diffused this ignorance, by opposing every kind of pagan erudition. If from time to time some efforts were made to dispel this obscurity, they were extinguished by capital punishments.

While the popes were undeceiving the minds of men respecting their authority, even by the abuse they made of it, knowledge was passing on from the east to the west. As soon as the masterpieces of antiquity had revived the taste for useful study, reason recovered some of the rights which it had lost. The history of the church was investigated, and the false pretensions of the court of Rome were discovered. Part of Europe shook off the yoke. A monk set almost all Germany, and almost the whole north, free from it; a priest, some provinces of France; and a king, all England, for the sake of a woman. If other sovereigns firmly maintained the catholic religion throughout their possessions, it was, perhaps, because it was more favourable to that blind and passive obedience which they require from their people, and which the popish clergy have always preached for their own interests.

In the meanwhile, the desire, on one hand, of preserving the pontifical authority, and the wish of destroying it on the other, have produced two opposite systems. The catholic divines have undertaken, and even successfully, to prove that the holy books are not of themselves the touchstone of orthodoxy. They have demonstrated, that, since the first preaching of the gospel to our times, the scriptures, differently understood, had given rise to the most opposite, the most extravagant, and the most impious opinions; and that with this divine word, the most contradictory tenets may have been maintained, as long as inward sentiment hath been the only interpreter of the revelation.

The writers of the reformed religion have shewn the absurdity of believing, that one man alone was constantly in-

spired from Heaven, upon a throne, or in a chair, in which the most monstrous vices have been committed; where dissipation was seated by the side of inspiration; where adultery and concubinage profaned the idols who were invested with the character, and with the name of sanctity; where the spirit of falsehood and of artifice dictated the pretended oracles of truth. They have demonstrated, that the church, assembled in council, and composed of intriguing prelates, under the emperors of the primitive church, of ignorant and debauched ones, in the times of barbarism and of ambition, and of ostentatious ones in the ages of schism; that such a church could not be more enlightened by supernatural inspiration than the vicar of Jesus himself; that the spirit of God did not more visibly communicate itself to two hundred fathers of the council, than to the holy father himself, who was often the most profligate of men; that Germans and Spaniards without learning, French without morals, and Italians without any virtue, were not so well qualified for the spirit of revelation, as a simple flock of peasants, who sincerely seek after God by prayer and by labour. In a word, if they have not been able to support their new system in the eyes of reason, they have at least entirely destroyed that of the ancient church.

In the midst of these ruins, philosophy hath arisen, and said,—if the text of the scripture be not sufficiently clear, precise, and authentic, to be the sole and infallible rule of doctrine and of worship; if the tradition of the church, from its first institution to the times of Luther and Calvin, hath been corrupted with the manners of priests, and of its followers; if the councils have doubted, varied, and decided contradictorily in their assemblies; if it be unworthy of the Divinity to communicate its spirit and its word to one single man, debauched in his youth, reduced to imbecility in his old age, subject, in a word, to the passions, the errors, and the infirmities, of man: then, say they, there is no firm and stable support for the infallibility of the christian faith; consequently, that religion is not of divine institution, and God hath not intended that it should be eternal.

This dilemma is very embarrassing. As long as the sense of the scriptures shall remain open to the contests it hath

ever experienced, and that tradition shall be as problematical as it hath appeared to be, from the immense labours of the clergy of different communions, christianity can have no support but from the civil authority, and the power of the magistrate. The proper force of religion, which subdues the mind, and restrains the conscience by conviction, will be wanting to it.

Accordingly, these disputes have gradually led the nations which had shaken off the yoke of an authority, considered till then as infallible, farther than it had been foreseen. They have almost generally rejected, from the ancient mode of worship, what was contrary to their reason, and have only preserved a christianity disengaged from all mysteries. Revelation itself hath been abandoned in these regions, though at a later period, by some men more bold, or who thought themselves more enlightened than the multitude. A manner of thinking, so proud and independent, hath extended itself, in process of time, to those states which had remained subject to Rome. As in these countries knowledge had made less progress, and opinions had been more confined, licentiousness in them hath been carried to its utmost extent. Atheism, the system either of a discontented and gloomy spirit, which sees nothing but confusion in nature, or of a wicked man who dreads future vengeance, or of a set of philosophers neither gloomy nor wicked, who vainly imagine they find in the properties of eternal matter a sufficient cause for all the phenomena which excite our admiration.

By an impulse founded on the nature of religions themselves, catholicism tends incessantly to protestantism, protestantism to socinianism, socinianism to deism, and deism to scepticism. Incredulity is become too general, to allow us to hope, with any degree of foundation, that the ancient tenets can regain the ascendant which they enjoyed during so many centuries. Let them be always freely followed, by such of their sectators who are attached to them from conscience, by all those who find matter of consolation in them, and by all whom they incite to perform the duties of a citizen: but let all sects, the principles of which are not contrary to public order, find in general the same indulgence. It would be consistent with the dignity, as well as with the wisdom of all governments, to have the same

moral code of religion, from which it should not be allowed to deviate, and to give the rest up to discussions, in which the tranquillity of the world was not concerned. This would be the surest way of extinguishing, insensibly, the fanaticism of the clergy and the enthusiasm of the people.

It is partly to the discovery of the New World that we shall owe that religious toleration which ought to be, and certainly will be, introduced in the Old. Persecution would only hasten the downfall of the religions that are now established. Industry and the means of information have now prevailed among the nations, and gained an influence that must restore a certain equilibrium in the moral and civil order of society: the human mind is undeceived with regard to its former superstitions. If we do not avail ourselves of the present time to re-establish the empire of reason, it must necessarily be given up to new superstitions.

Every thing has concurred, for these two last centuries, to extinguish that furious zeal which ravaged the globe. The depredations of the Spaniards throughout America have shewn the world to what excess fanaticism may be carried. In establishing their religion by fire and sword through exhausted and depopulated countries, they have rendered it odious in Europe; and their cruelties have contributed to separate a greater number of catholics from the church of Rome, than they have gained converts to christianity among the Indians. The concourse of persons of all sects in North America has necessarily diffused the spirit of toleration into distant countries, and put a stop to religious wars in our climates. The sending of missionaries has delivered us from those turbulent men, who might have inflamed our country, and who are gone to carry the firebrands and swords of the gospel beyond the seas. Navigation and long voyages have insensibly detached a great number of the people from the absurd ideas which superstition inspires. The variety of religious worships, and the difference of nations, has accustomed the most vulgar minds to a sort of indifference for the object that had the greatest influence over their imaginations. Trade carried on between persons of the most opposite sects, has lessened that religious hatred which was the cause of their divisions. It has been found that morality and integrity were not incon-

sistent with any opinions whatever, and that irregularity of manners and avarice were equally prevalent everywhere; and hence it has been concluded that the manners of men have been regulated by the difference of climate and of government, and by social and national interest.

Since an intercourse has been established between the two hemispheres of this world, our thoughts have been less engaged about that other world, which was the hope of the few and the torment of the many. The diversity and multiplicity of objects industry hath presented to the mind and to the senses, have divided the attachments of men, and weakened the force of every sentiment. The characters of men have been softened, and the spirit of fanaticism, as well as that of chivalry, must necessarily have been extinguished, together with all those striking extravagancies which have prevailed among people who were indolent and averse from labour. The same causes that have produced this revolution in the manners, have yet had a more sudden influence on the nature of government.

Government. Society naturally results from population, and government is a part of the social state. From considering the few wants men have, in proportion to the resources nature affords them, the little assistance and happiness they find in a civilized state, in comparison of the pains and evils they are exposed to in it; their desire of independence and liberty, common to them with all other living beings; together with various other reasons deduced from the constitutions of human nature; from considering all these circumstances, it has been doubted whether the social state was so natural to mankind as it has generally been thought.

Insulated men have generally been compared to separate springs. If in the state of nature, without legislation, without government, without chiefs, without magistrates, without tribunals, and without laws, one of these springs should clash with another, either the latter broke the former, or was broken by it, or they were both of them broken. But when, by collecting and arranging these springs, one of those enormous machines, called societies, had been formed, in which, being stretched one against the other, they act and re-act with all the violence of their particular ener-

gy, a real state of war was artificially created, and that of war diversified by an innumerable multitude of interests and opinions. The confusion was still infinitely greater, when two, three, four, or five, of these terrible machines came to shock each other at the same time. It was then, that in the space of a few hours, more springs were broken and destroyed, than would have been in the course of twenty centuries, either before or without this sublime institution. Thus it is that the first founders of nations are satirized, under the supposition of an ideal and chimerical savage state. Men were never insulated in the manner here described. They bore within themselves a germin of sociability, which was incessantly tending to unfold itself. Had they been inclined to separate, they could not have done it; and supposing they could, they ought not; the defects of their association being compensated by greater advantages.

The weakness and long continuance of the infant state of man; the nakedness of his body, which has no natural covering like that of other animals; the tendency of his mind to perfection, the necessary consequence of the length of his life; the fondness of a mother for her child, which is increased by cares and fatigues, who, after she has carried it in the womb for nine months, suckles and bears it in her arms for whole years; the reciprocal attachment arising from this habitual connection between two beings who relieve and care for each other; the numerous signs of intercourse in an organization, which, beside the accents of the voice, common to so many animals, adds also the language of the fingers, and of gestures peculiar to the human race; natural events, which in a hundred different ways may bring together, or re-unite wandering and free individuals; accidents and unforeseen wants, which oblige them to meet for the purposes of hunting, fishing, or even of defence; in a word, the example of so many creatures that live collected together in great numbers, such as amphibious animals and sea monsters, flocks of cranes and other birds, even insects that are found in columns and swarms: all these facts and reasons seem to prove, that men are by nature formed for society, and that they are the sooner disposed to enter into it, because they cannot multiply greatly under the torrid zone, unless they be collected into

wandering or sedentary tribes; nor can they diffuse themselves much under the other zones, without associating with their fellow-creatures, for the prey and the spoils which the necessities of food and clothing require.

From the necessity of association, arises that of establishing laws relative to the social state; that is to say, of forming, by a combination of all common and particular instincts, one general plan, that shall maintain the collective body, and the majority of individuals. For if nature direct man to his fellow-creature, it is undoubtedly by a consequence of that universal attraction which tends to the preservation and reproduction of the species. All the propensities which man brings with him into society, and all the impressions he receives in it, ought to be subordinate to this first impulse. To live and to propagate being the destination of every living species, it should seem that society, if it be one of the first principles of man, should concur in assisting this double end of nature; and that instinct which leads him to the social state, should necessarily direct all moral and political laws, so as that they should be more durable, and contribute more to the happiness of the majority of mankind. If, however, we consider merely the effect, we should think that the principal or supreme law of all society has been, *to support the ruling power*. Whence can arise this singular contrast between the end and the means; between the laws of nature and those of politics?

This is a question to which it is difficult to give a proper answer, without forming to one's self just notions of nature, and of the succession of the several governments; and history scarce affords us any assistance respecting this great object. All the foundations of the society at present are lost in the ruins of some catastrophe, some natural revolution. In all parts we see men driven away by subterraneous fires or by war, by inundations or by devouring insects, by want or famine; and joining again in some uninhabited corner of the world, or dispersing and spreading themselves over places already peopled. Police always arises from plunder, and order from anarchy; but in order to obtain some conclusion which shall be satisfactory to reason, these momentary shocks must not be attended to, and nations must be considered in a stationary and tranquil

state, in which the singularities of government may appear without controul.

It hath been said that there are two worlds, the natural and the moral. The more extensive the mind shall become, and the more experience it shall acquire, the more shall we be convinced that there is but one, viz. the natural world, which leads every thing, when it is not opposed by fortuitous causes, without which we should constantly have observed the same concatenation in those moral events which strike us with most astonishment, such as the origin of religious ideas, the progress of the human mind, the discovery of truths, the source and the succession of errors, the beginning and the end of prejudices, the formation of societies, and the periodical order of the several governments.

All civilized people have been savages; and all savages, left to their natural impulse, were destined to become civilized. A family was the first society, and the first government was the patriarchal, founded upon attachment, obedience, and respect. The family is extended and divided; opposite interests excite wars between brothers, who disavow each other. One people takes up arms against another. The vanquished become the slaves of the conquerors, who share among themselves, their plains, their children, and their wives. The country is governed by a chief, by his lieutenants, and by his soldiers, who represent the free part of the nation, while all the rest is subjected to the atrociousness and to the humiliations of servitude. In this state of anarchy, blinded with jealousy and ferociousness, peace is soon disturbed. These restless men march against and exterminate each other. In process of time there remains only a monarch, or a despot under the monarch. There is a shadow of justice; legislation makes some progress; ideas of property are unfolded; and the name of slave is changed into that of subject. Under the supreme will of a despot, nothing prevails but terror, meanness, flattery, stupidity, and superstition. This intolerable situation ceases, either by the assassination of the tyrant, or by the dissolution of the empire; and democracy is raised up on its ruins. It is then, for the first time, that the sacred name of one's country is heard. It is then that man, bent down to earth, raises his head, and appears in his dignity.

Then the annals of the nation are filled with heroic deeds. Then there are fathers, mothers, children, friends, fellow-citizens, public and domestic virtues. Then the empire of the laws is established, soars to its extreme height, the sciences arise, and useful labours are no longer degraded.

Unfortunately this state of happiness is only temporary. In all parts, revolutions in government succeed each other with a rapidity scarce to be followed. There are few countries which have not experienced them all; and there is not any one which, in process of time, will not fulfil this periodical motion. They will all, more or less frequently, follow a regular circle of misfortunes and prosperities, of liberty and slavery, of morals and corruption, of knowledge and ignorance, of splendour and weakness; they will all go through the several points of this fatal horizon. The law of nature, which requires that all societies should gravitate towards despotism and dissolution, that empires should arise and be annihilated, will not be suspended for any one of them. While, like the needle which indicates the constant direction of the winds, they are either advancing or going back, let us see by what means Europe is arrived to that state of civilization in which it now exists.

Waving any further account of the Jewish government, unless just to observe, that this singular nation hath maintained its character, under all the vicissitudes of its destiny; that the Jews, conquered, subdued, dispersed, hated, and despised, have still remained attached to their nation; that they have carried their annals, and their country with them, into all climates; that whatever region they inhabit, they live in expectation of a deliverer, and die with their looks fixed upon their ancient temple; let us pass on to the states of Greece.

These were founded by robbers, who destroyed a few monsters, and a great number of men, in order to become kings. It was there, that during a short space of time, at least if we date from the heroic ages, and in a narrow circuit, we have a review of all the species of governments, of aristocracy, of democracy, of monarchy, of despotism, and of anarchy, which was only suspended, without being extinguished, by the approach of the common enemy. There it was that the imminent danger of slavery gave birth and stability to patriotism, which leads in its train the origin of

all great talents ; sublime instance of all vices, and of all virtues ; an infinite number of schools of wisdom, in the midst of debauchery ; and some models in the fine arts, which in all ages art will always imitate, but will never equal. The Greeks were a frivolous, pleasant, lying, and ungrateful, people ; they were the only original people that have existed, or perhaps will ever exist, upon the face of the earth.

Rome, it is said, was founded by people who escaped from the flames of Troy, or was only a retreat for some banditti from Greece and Italy : but from this scum of the human race arose a nation of heroes, the scourge of all nations, the devourers of themselves ; a people more astonishing than admirable, great by their qualities, and worthy of execration by the use they made of them in the times of the republic ; the basest and most corrupt people under their emperors ; a people, of whom one of the most virtuous men of his age used to say : If the kings be ferocious animals, who devour nations, what kind of beast must the Roman people be who devour kings ?

War, which, from all the great nations of Europe together, had formed only the Roman empire, made these very Romans, who were so numerous, become barbarians again. As the dispositions and manners of the conquering people are generally impressed upon the conquered, those who had been enlightened with the knowledge of Rome at the period when it was distinguished by its learning, now sank again into the darkness of stupid and ferocious Sythians. During ages of ignorance, when superior strength always gave the law, and chance or hunger had compelled the people of the north to invade the southern countries, the continual ebb and flow of emigrations prevented laws from being settled in any place. As soon as a multitude of small nations had destroyed a large one, many chiefs or tyrants divided each vast monarchy into several fiefs. The people, who gained no advantage by the government of one, or of several men, were always oppressed and trampled upon from these dismemberings of the feudal anarchy. Petty wars were continually kept up between neighbouring towns, instead of those great wars that now prevail between nations.

In the meanwhile, a continual ferment led the nations to establish themselves into some regular and consistent form of government. Kings were desirous of raising themselves upon the ruins of these individuals, or of those powerful bodies of men, by whom the commotions were kept up; and to affect this, they had recourse to the assistance of the people. They were civilized, polished, and more rational laws were given them.

Slavery had oppressed their natural vigour, property restored it, and commerce, which prevailed after the discovery of the New World, increased all their powers, by exciting universal emulation.

These changes were attended with a revolution of another kind. The monarchs had not been capable of aggrandizing their power without diminishing that of the clergy, without favouring religious opinions, or endeavouring to bring them into discredit. Innovators, who ventured to attack the church, were supported by the throne. From that time, the human understanding was strengthened by exerting itself against the phantoms of imagination, and recovering the path of nature and of reason, discovered the true principles of government. Luther and Columbus appeared; the whole universe trembled; and all Europe was in commotion: but this storm left its horizon clear for ages to come. The former awakened the understandings of men, the latter excited their activity. Since they have laid open all the avenues of industry and freedom, most of the European nations have attended with some success to the correction or improvement of legislation, upon which the felicity of mankind entirely depends. But this spirit of information hath not yet reached the Turks.

The Turks were not known in Asia till the beginning of the thirteenth century; at which time the Tartars, of whom they were a tribe, made frequent excursions upon the territories of the eastern empire, as the Goths had formerly done in the western provinces. It was in 1300 that Ottoman was declared sultan by his nation, who, living till then upon plunder, or selling their service to some Abassic prince, had not yet thought of forming an independent empire. Ottoman became the chief among these barbarians, as a savage distinguished by his bravery becomes a chief among his equals; for the Turks at that time were

only a horde fixed in the neighbourhood of a people who were half civilized.

Under this prince and his successors, the Ottoman power was daily making fresh progress; nothing resisted it. Princes brought up in the midst of camps, and born captains, armies accustomed to victory by continual wars, and better disciplined than those of the christians, repaired the defects of a bad government.

Constantinople, taken by Mohammed in 1453, became the capital of their empire; and the princes of Europe, plunged in ignorance and barbarism, could only have opposed an ineffectual dike to this overflowing torrent, if the first successors of Mohammed, at the head of a nation which still preserved the manners, the genius, and the discipline, of its founders, had not been obliged to interrupt their expeditions in Poland, in Hungary, or upon the domains of the republic of Venice, in order to go sometimes into Asia, sometimes into Africa, either against rebellious subjects or turbulent neighbours. Their fortune began to fall off as soon as their forces were divided. Successes less rapid and less brilliant occasioned their armies to lose that confidence which was the soul of their exploits. The rest of the empire, crushed under the most rigorous despotism, had not attained to any degree of splendour. It had acquired no real strength from conquests, because it had not known how to take advantage of them by prudent regulations. Destroying in order to preserve, the conquerors had acquired nothing. They reigned only over provinces laid waste, and over the wrecks of the powers whom they had ruined.

While a deceitful prosperity was preparing the fall of the Ottoman empire, a contrary revolution was taking place in Christendom. The minds of men were beginning to be enlightened. Principles less extravagant were introducing themselves into Poland. Feudal government, the fertile source of so many calamities, and which had lasted for so long a time, gave way in several states to a more regular form of government. In other states it was gradually altered, either by laws or by new customs, with which some fortunate circumstances obliged it to comply. At length a power was formed in the neighbourhood of the Turks capable of resisting them: I mean the accession of Ferdinand to the throne of Hungary. This prince, master

of the possessions of the house of Austria in Germany, was besides certain, from his imperial crown, of powerful succours against the common enemy.

A military government tends to despotism; and reciprocally in every despotic government, the military man disposes sooner or later of the sovereign authority. The prince, freed from all kind of law which might restrain his power, doth not fail of abusing it, and soon commands over none but slaves, who take no kind of concern about his fate. He who oppresses finds no defender, because he deserves none. His grandeur is without foundation. His own fears are awakened from the same motives by which he hath excited terror in others. The use he makes of the militia against his subjects, teaches this very militia what they can do against himself. They try their strength, they mutiny, and they revolt. The want of power in the prince makes them insolent. They acquire a spirit of sedition, and it is then that they decide of the fate of their master and of his ministers.

Soliman, informed by the internal commotions which had agitated the empire under the reigns of Bajazet II and Selim II, of the dangers which threatned himself and his successors, thought that he could adopt no better expedient than to enact a law which deprived the princes of his house both of the command of the armies and of the government of the provinces. It was by burying in the obscure idleness of a seraglio those to whom their birth gave any pretensions to the empire, that he flattered himself he should remove from the janizaries every pretence of sedition; but he was deceived. This bad policy served only to increase the mischief of an evil that was perhaps still greater. His successors, corrupted by an effeminate education, bore without authority the sword which had founded and had extended the empire. Ignorant princes, who had frequented none but women, and conversed with none but eunuchs, were invested with an unlimited authority, the most unparalleled abuse of which completed the hatred and misery of their subjects, and plunged them in an absolute dependence on the janizaries, become more avicious and more untractable than ever. If sometimes, by chance, a sovereign was raised to the throne, who was worthy of occupying it, he was driven from it by ministers,

enemies of a master who was able to restrain and examine their power, and penetrate into their conduct.

Though the grand signior possesses vast domains, though the situation of his empire ought to interest him in the disputes of the christian princes, he hath scarce any influence in the general system of Europe. This is the effect of the ignorance prevailing among the ministry of the Porte, of their prejudices, of the unvariableness of their principles, of the other vices which flow from despotism, and which will perpetuate their bad policy; for tyrants dread nothing so much as novelty. They imagine that all is right; and in fact nothing advances more rapidly towards perfection than despotism. The best princes leave always a great deal of good to be done by their successors, while the first despot scarce ever leaves any evil for a second to do. Besides, how should a grand signior, sunk in the voluptuousness of a seraglio, suspect that the administration of his dominions is detestable? How is it possible he should not admire the wonderful exactness of the springs, the prodigious harmony of the principles, and of the means which all concur to produce that single and super-excellent end, his most unlimited power, and the most profound servitude of his subjects? None of them are warned by the fate of so many of their predecessors, who have been either stabbed or strangled.

The sultans have never changed their principles. The scimitar, at Constantinople, is still the interpreter of the koran. Though the grand signior may not be seen coming in and going out of the seraglio, like the tyrant of Morocco, with a bloody head in his hand, yet a numerous cohort of satellities is engaged to execute these horrible murders. The people sometimes massacred by their rulers, at other times assassinate the executioner in their turn; but, satisfied with this temporary vengeance, they think not of providing for their future safety, or for the happiness of their posterity. Eastern nations will not be at the trouble of guarding the public safety by laws, which it is a laborious task to form, to settle, and to preserve. If their tyrants carry their oppressions or cruelties too far, the head of the vizir is demanded, that of the despot is stricken off, and thus public tranquillity is restored. This remonstrance, which should be the privilege of the whole nation, is only that of the janizaries. Even the most powerful men in the

kingdom have not the least idea of the right of nations. As personal safety in Turkey belongs only to people of a mean and abject condition, the chief families pride themselves in the very danger they are exposed to from the government. A bashaw will tell you, that a man of his rank is not destined, like an obscure person, to finish his days quietly in his bed. One may frequently see widows, whose husbands have been just strangled, exulting that they have been destroyed in a manner suitable to their rank.

It is to this pitch of extravagance that men are led, when tyranny is consecrated by religious ideas, which sooner or later it must be. When men cease to take pride in their chains in the eyes of the deity, they look upon them with contempt, and soon proceed to break them. If the apotheosis of the tyrants of Rome had not been a farce, Tiberius would not have been stifled, nor would the murders committed by Nero have been avenged. Oppression, authorised by heaven, inspires such a contempt for life, that it induces the slave to take pride even in his abject state. He is vain of becoming in the eyes of his master a being of sufficient importance, that he should not disdain to put him to death. What difference is there between man and man? A Roman will kill himself for fear of owing his life to his equal; and the Mussulman will glory in the sentence of death pronounced against him by his master. Imagination, which can measure the distance of the earth from the firmament, cannot comprehend this. But what is still more surprising is, that the assassination of a despot, so profoundly revered, far from exciting horror, doth not make the least impression. The man who would have joyfully offered him his own head a few minutes before, beholds without emotion his master stricken off by the scimitar. His indifference seems to say, that, whether the tyrant be dead or alive, he cannot fail of the honour of being strangled under his successor.

The Russians and the Danes do not entertain the same prejudices, though subject to a power equally arbitrary; because these two nations have the advantage of a more tolerable administration, and of some written laws. They can venture to think, or even to say, that their government is limited; but have never been able to persuade any enlightened man of the truth of their assertion. While the

sovereign makes and annuls the laws, extends or restrains them, and permits or suspends the execution of them at pleasure; while his passions are the only rule of his conduct; while he is the only, the central being to whom every thing tends; while nothing is either just or unjust but what he makes so; while his caprice is the law, and his favour the standard of public esteem; if this be not despotism, what other kind of government can it possibly be?

In such a state of degradation, what are men? Enslaved as they are, they can scarce venture to look up to heaven. They are insensible of their chains, as well as of the shame that attends them. The powers of their minds, extinguished in the bonds of slavery, have not sufficient energy to discover the rights inseparable from their existence. It may be a matter of doubt whether these slaves be not as culpable as their tyrants, and whether the spirit of liberty may not have greater reason to complain of the arrogance of those who invade her rights, than of the weakness of those who know not how to defend them.

It hath, however, been frequently asserted, that the most happy form of government would be that of a just and enlightened despotic prince. The absurdity of this is evident; for it might easily happen that the will of this absolute monarch might be in direct opposition to the will of his subjects. In that case, notwithstanding all his justice and all his abilities, he would deserve censure to deprive them of their rights, even though it were for their own benefit. No man whatever is intitled to treat his fellow-creatures like so many beasts. Beasts may be forced to exchange a bad pasture for a better; but to use such compulsion with men, would be an act of tyranny. If they should say that they are very well where they are, or even if they should agree in allowing that their situation is a bad one, but that they choose to stay in it, we may endeavour to enlighten them, to undeceive them, and to bring them to juster notions by the means of persuasion, but never by those of compulsion. The best of princes, who should even have done good against the general consent of his people, would be culpable, if it were only because he had gone beyond his right. He would be culpable not only for the time, but even with regard to posterity; for though he might be just and enlightened, yet his successor, without

inheriting either his abilities, or his virtues, will certainly inherit his authority, of which the nation will become the victim. A first despot, just, steady, and enlightened, is a great calamity; a second despot, just, steady, and enlightened, would be a still greater one; but a third, who should succeed with all these great qualities, would be the most terrible scourge with which a nation could be afflicted. It is possible to emerge from a state of slavery into which we may have been plunged by violence, but never from that into which we have been led by time and justice. If the lethargy of the people be the forerunner of the loss of their liberty, what lethargy can be more mild, more profound, and more perfidious, than that which hath lasted during three reigns, and which hath been kept up by acts of kindness?

Let not therefore these pretended masters of the people be allowed even to do good against the general consent. Let it be considered, that the condition of those rulers is exactly the same as that of the cacique, who being asked, Whether he had any slaves? answered: "Slaves! I know but one " slave in all my district, and that is myself."

It is of so much importance to prevent the establishment of arbitrary power, and the calamities which are the infallible consequences of it, that it is impossible for the despot himself to remedy these great evils. Should he have been upon the throne for half a century; should his administration have been entirely tranquil; should he have had the most extensive knowledge; and should his zeal for the happiness of the people not have been one moment slackened; still nothing would be done. The enfranchisement, or, what is the same thing under another name, the civilization of an empire, is a long and difficult work. Before a nation hath been confirmed, by habit, in a durable attachment for this new order of things, a prince, either from inability, indolence, prejudice, or jealousy, from a predilection for ancient customs, or from a spirit of tyranny, may annihilate all the good accomplished in the course of two or three reigns, or may suffer it to be ineffectual. All monuments therefore attest, that the civilization of states have been more the effect of circumstances, than of the wisdom of sovereigns. All nations have changed from barbarism to a state of civilization; and from a civilized

state to barbarism, till some unforeseen causes have brought them to that level which they never perfectly maintain.

We may, perhaps, be allowed to doubt, whether all these causes concur with the efforts which are at present making towards the civilization of Russia.

Is the climate of this region very favourable to civilization and to population, which is sometimes the cause and sometimes the effect of them? Doth not the coldness of the climate require the preservation of the large forests, and, consequently, must not immense spaces remain uninhabited? As an excessive length of winter suspends the labours for the space of seven or eight months of the year, doth not the nation, during this time of lethargy, devote itself to gaming, to wine, to debauchery, and to an immoderate use of spiritous liquors? Can good manners be introduced, notwithstanding the climate? and is it possible to civilize a barbarous people without manners?

Doth not the immense extent of the empire, which embraces all kinds of climates, from the coldest to the hottest, oppose a powerful obstacle to the legislator? Could one and the same code suit so many different regions; and is not the necessity of having several codes the same thing as the impossibility of having only one? Can any means be conceived of subjecting to one same rule people who do not understand each other, who speak seventeen or eighteen different languages, and who preserve, from times immemorial, customs and superstitions to which they are more attached than to their existence?

As authority weakens, in proportion as the subjects are distant from the centre of dominion, is it possible to be obeyed at a thousand miles distance from the spot from whence the commands are issued! Should any body tell me that the matter is possible by the influence of government, I shall only reply by the speech of one of these indiscreet delegates, who revealed what passed in the minds of all the others: "God is very high; the emperor is at a great distance; and I am master here."

As the empire is divided into two classes of men, that of the masters and that of the slaves, how can such opposite interests be conciliated? Tyrants will never freely consent to the extinction of servitude; and in order to bring them to this, it would be necessary to ruin or to exterminate

them. But supposing this obstacle removed, how is it possible to raise from the degraded state of slavery, to the sentiment and to the dignity of liberty, people who are so entirely strangers to it, as to be either helpless or ferocious, whenever they are released from their fetters? These difficulties will certainly suggest the idea of creating a third order in the state; but by what means is this to be accomplished; and supposing the means discovered, how many ages would it require to obtain any sensible effect from them?

In expectation of the formation of this third class of men, which might, perhaps, be accelerated by colonists invited from the free countries of Europe, it would be necessary that an entire security should be established, both with respect to persons and to property; and could such a security be established in a country where the tribunals are occupied by the lords alone; where these species of magistrates reciprocally favour each other, where there can be no prosecution against them, or against their creatures, from which either the natives or the foreigners can expect that the injuries they have received should be redressed; and where venality pronounces the sentence in every kind of contest? We shall ask, whether there can be any civilization without justice, and whether it be possible to establish justice in such an empire?

The towns are distributed over an immense territory. There are no roads, and those which might be constructed would be soon spoiled by the climate. Accordingly, desolation is universal, when a damp winter puts a stop to every communication. Let us travel over all the countries of the earth, and wherever we shall find no facility of trading from a city to a town, and from a village to a hamlet, we may pronounce the people to be barbarians; and we shall only be deceived respecting the degree of barbarism. In this state of things, the greatest happiness that could happen to a country of an enormous extent would be to be dismembered by some great revolution, and to be divided into several petty sovereignties, contiguous to each other, where the order introduced into some of them would be diffused through the rest. If it be very difficult to govern properly a large civilized empire, must it not be more so to civilize a vast and barbarous empire?

Toleration, it is true, subsists at Petersburg, and almost

in an unlimited degree. Judaism alone is excluded, because it hath been thought that its sectators were either too crafty, or too deceitful in trade, to expose to their snares a people who had not experience enough to preserve themselves from them. This toleration in the capital would be a great step towards civilization, if in the rest of the empire the people did not remain immersed in the most gross superstitions; and if these superstitions were not fomented by a numerous clergy, plunged in debauchery and ignorance, without being the less revered. How can a state be civilized without the interference of priests, who are necessarily prejudicial, if not useful?

The high opinion that, according to the example of the Chinese, the Russians have of themselves, is another obstacle to reformation. They truly consider themselves as the most sensible people upon the earth, and are confirmed in this absurd vanity by those among them who have visited the rest of Europe. These travellers bring back, or feign to bring back, into their country, the prejudice of their own superiority, and enrich it only with the vices which they have acquired in the divers regions where chance hath conducted them. Accordingly, a foreign observer, who had gone over the greatest part of the empire, used to say, that "the Russian was rotten before he had been "ripe."

We might extend ourselves more upon the difficulties which nature and customs obstinately oppose to the civilization of Russia. Let us examine the means which have been contrived to succeed in it.

Catharine hath undoubtedly been very well convinced, that liberty was the only source of public happiness: and yet, hath she really abdicated despotic authority? In reading attentively her instructions to the deputies of the empire, apparently intrusted with the formation of the laws, is any thing more found in them than the desire of altering denominations, and of being called monarch, instead of autocratrix? of calling her people subjects, instead of slaves? Will the Russians, blind as they are, take the name, instead of the thing, for any length of time; and will their character be elevated, by this farce, to that great degree of energy with which it was proposed to inspire them?

A sovereign, however great his genius may be, seldom

makes alterations of any consequence by himself, and still more unfrequently gives them any degree of stability. He stands in need of assistance, and Russia can offer no other than that of fighting. Its soldiers are hardy, sober, indefatigable. Slavery, which hath inspired them with a contempt of life, hath united with superstition, which hath inspired them with contempt of death. They are persuaded, that, whatever crimes they may have committed, their soul will ascend to heaven from the field of battle. But military men, if they defend the provinces, do not civilize them. In vain do we seek for statesmen about the person of Catharine. What she hath done of herself may be astonishing; but who can be substituted to her, when she shall be no more?

This princess hath founded houses, in which young people of both sexes are brought up with the sentiment of liberty. This will undoubtedly produce a different race from the present. But are these establishments founded upon a solid basis? Are they sustained by themselves, or by the succours which are incessantly lavished upon them? If the present reign hath seen the origin of them, will not the succeeding reign see them annihilated? Are they very agreeable to the great, who perceive the destination of them? Will not the climate, which disposes of every thing, prevail at length over good principles? Will corruption spare those young people who are lost in the immensity of the empire, and who are assailed on all sides by bad morals?

There are a great number of academies of all kinds in the capital; and if these be filled by foreigners, will not these establishments be useless and ruinous, in a country where the learned are not understood, and where there is no employment for artists? In order that talents and knowledge might thrive, it would be necessary, that, being offsprings of the soil, they should be the effect of a superabundant population. When will this population arrive to the proper degree of increase, in a country where the slave, to console himself for the wretchedness of his condition, may indeed produce as many children as he can, but will care very little about preserving them?

All those who are admitted and brought up in the hospital recently established for foundlings, are for ever emancipated from slavery. Their descendants will not submit to the yoke again; and as in Spain there are old or new

christians, so in Russia there will be old and new freemen. But the effect of this innovation can only be proportioned to its continuance : and can we reckon upon the duration of any establishment, in a country where the succession to the empire is not yet inviolably confirmed, and where the inconstancy which is natural to an enslaved people brings on frequent and sudden revolutions ? If the authors of these conspiracies do not form a body, as in Turkey, if they be a set of insulated individuals, they are soon assembled together, by a secret ferment and by a common hatred.

During the last war, a fund was created for the use of all the members of the empire, even of slaves. By this idea of sound and deep policy, the government acquired a capital, of which it stood in great need ; and it sheltered, as much as possible, the vassals from the vexations of their tyrants. It is in the nature of things, that the confidence with which this paper money hath been received should change, and be annulled. It doth not belong to a despot to obtain credit : and if some singular events have procured it to him, it is a necessary consequence that succeeding events will him lose it.

Such are the difficulties which have appeared to us to counteract the civilization of the Russian empire. If Catharine II. should succeed in surmounting them, we shall have made the most magnificent eulogium of her courage and her genius, and perhaps the best apology, if she should ~~ever~~ fail in this great design.

Sweden is situated between Russia and Denmark. Let us examine the history of its constitution, and endeavour, if possible, to find out the nature of it.

Nations that are poor are almost necessarily warlike ; because their poverty, the burthen of which they constantly feel, inspires them sooner or later with a desire of freeing themselves from it ; and this desire, in process of time, becomes the general spirit of the nation, and the spring of the government.

It only requires a succession of sovereigns, fortunate in war, to change suddenly the government of such a country, from the state of a mild monarchy, to that of the most absolute despotism. The monarch, proud of his triumph, thinks he will be suffered to do whatever he chooses, begins to acknowledge no law but his will ; and his soldiers, whom

he hath led so often to victory, ready^t to serve him in all things, and against all men, become, by their attachment to the prince, the terror of their fellow-citizens. The people, on the other hand, dare not refuse the chains, when offered to them by him, who, to the authority of his rank, joins that which he holds from their admiration and gratitude.

The yoke imposed by a monarch who has conquered the enemies of the state is certainly burthensome; but the subjects dare not shake it off. It even grows heavier under successors, who have not the same claim to the indulgence of the people. Whenever any considerable reverse of fortune takes place, the despot will be left to their mercy. Then the people, irritated by their long sufferings, seldom fail to avail themselves of the opportunity of recovering their rights. But as they have neither views nor plans, they quickly pass from slavery to anarchy. In the midst of this general confusion, one exclamation only is heard, and that is, liberty. But, as they know not how to secure to themselves this inestimable benefit, the nation becomes immediately divided into various factions, which are guided by different interests.

If there be one among these factions that despairs of prevailing over the others, that faction separates itself from the rest, unmindful of the general good; and being more anxious to prejudice its rivals than to serve its country, it sides with the sovereign. From that moment there are but two parties in the state, distinguished by two different names, which, whatever they be, never mean any thing more than royalists and antiroyalists. This is the period of great commotions and conspiracies.

The neighbouring powers then act the same part they have ever acted at all times, and in all countries, upon similar occasions. They foment jealousies between the people and their prince; they suggest to the subjects every possible method of debasing, degrading, and annihilating, the sovereignty; they corrupt even those who are nearest the throne; they occasion some form of administration to be adopted, prejudicial both to the whole body of the nation, which it impoverishes under pretence of exerting itself for their liberty, and injurious to the sovereign, whose prerogative it reduces to nothing.

The monarch then meets with as many authorities op-

posed to his, as there are ranks in the state. His will is then nothing without their concurrence. Assemblies must then be holden, proposals made, and affairs of the least importance debated. Tutors are assigned to him, as to a pupil in his non-age; and those tutors are persons whom he may always expect to find ill-intentioned towards him.

But what is then the state of the nation? The neighbouring powers have now, by their influence, thrown every thing into confusion; they have overturned the state, or seduced all the members of it by bribery or intrigues. There is now but one party in the kingdom, and that is the party which espouses the interest of the foreign powers. The members of the factions are all dissemblers. Attachment to the king is an hypocrisy, and aversion for monarchy another. They are two different masks to conceal ambition and avarice. The whole nation is now entirely composed of infamous and venal men.

It is not difficult to conceive what must happen after this. The foreign powers that had corrupted the nation must be deceived in their expectations. They did not perceive that they carried matters too far; that, perhaps, they acted a part quite contrary to that which a deeper policy would have suggested; that they were destroying the power of the nation, while they meant only to restrain that of the sovereign, which might one day exert itself with all its force, and meet with no resistance capable of checking it; and that this unexpected effect might be brought about in an instant, and by one man.

That instant is come; that man hath appeared; and all these base creatures of adverse powers have prostrated themselves before him. He told these men, who thought themselves all powerful, that they were nothing. He told them, I am your master; and they declared unanimously that he was. He told them, these are the conditions to which I would have you submit; and they answered, we agree to them. Scarce one dissenting voice was heard among them. It is impossible for any man to know what will be the consequence of this revolution. If the king will avail himself of these circumstances, Sweden will never have been governed by a more absolute monarch. If he be prudent, if he understand that an unlimited sovereign can have no subjects, because he can have no persons under him possessed of

property; and that authority can only be exerted over those who have some kind of property; the nation may, perhaps, recover its original character. Whatever may be his designs or his inclinations, Sweden cannot possibly be more unhappy than she was before.

Poland, which has none but slaves within, and therefore deserves to meet with none but oppressors without, still preserves, however, the shadow and the name of liberty. This kingdom is, at present, no better than all the European states were ten centuries ago, subject to a powerful aristocracy, which elects a king, in order to make him subservient to its will. Each nobleman, by virtue of his feudal tenure, which he preserves with his sword, as his ancestors acquired it, holds a personal and hereditary authority over his vassals. The feudal government prevails there in all the force of its primitive institution. It is an empire composed of as many states as there are lands. All the laws are settled there, and all resolutions taken, not by the majority, but by the unanimity of the suffrages. Upon false notions of right and perfection, it has been supposed that a law was only just when it was adopted by unanimous consent; because it has undoubtedly been thought, that what was right would both be perceived and put in practice by all; two things that are impossible in a national assembly. But can we even ascribe such pure intentions to a set of tyrants? For this constitution, which boasts the title of a republic, and profanes it, is only a league of petty tyrants against the people. In this country, every one has the power to restrain, and no one the power to act. Here the will of each individual may be in opposition to the general one; and here only a fool, a wicked man, and a madman, is sure to prevail over a whole nation.

In this state of anarchy, there is a perpetual struggle between the great and the monarch. The former torment the chief of the state by their avidity, their ambition, and their mistrust; they irritate him against liberty, and compel him to have recourse to intrigue. The prince, on his part, divides in order to command, seduces in order to defend himself, and opposes artifice to artifice in order to maintain himself. The factions are inflamed, discord throws every thing into confusion, and the provinces are delivered up to fire, to sword, and, to devastation. If the confederacy

should prevail, he who should have governed the nation is expelled from the throne, or reduced to the most ignominious dependence. If it should be subdued, the sovereign reigns only over carcases. Whatever may happen, the fate of the multitude experiences no fortunate revolution. Such of these unhappy people who have escaped from famine and carnage continue to bear the chains with which they were crushed.

If we go over these vast regions, what shall we see in them? The regal dignity, with the title of a republic; the pomp of the throne, with the inability of insuring obedience; the extravagant love of independence, with all the meanness of slavery; liberty, with cupidity; laws, with anarchy; the most excessive luxury, with the greatest indigence; a fertile soil, with fallow lands; a taste for all the arts, without any one of them. Such are the enormous contrasts Poland will exhibit.

It will be found exposed to every danger. The weakest of its enemies may enter with impunity, and without precaution, upon its territory, levy contributions, destroy the towns, ravage the country places, and massacre or carry off the inhabitants. Destitute of troops, of fortresses, of artillery, of ammunition, of money, of generals, and totally ignorant of military principles, what defence could it think of making? With a sufficient population, with sufficient genius and resources to appear of some consequence, Poland is become the opprobrium and the sport of nations.

If turbulent and enterprising neighbours had not yet invaded its possessions; if they had been satisfied with laying it waste, with dictating to it, and with giving it kings; it is because they were continually mistrustful of each other, but particular circumstances have united them. It was reserved for our days to see this state torn in pieces by three powerful rivals, who have appropriated to themselves those provinces that were most suitable to them, while no power of Europe hath exerted itself to prevent this invasion. It is in the midst of the security of peace, without rights, without pretensions, without grievances, and without a shadow of justice, that the revolution hath been accomplished by the terrible principle of force, which is, unfortunately, the best argument of kings. How great Poniatowski would have appeared, if, when he saw the preparatives for

this division, he had presented himself in the midst of the diet, and there abdicating the marks of his dignity, had proudly said to his nobles assembled,—“ It is your choice that hath raised me to the throne. If you repent of it, I resign the royal dignity. The crown which you have placed upon my head, let it devolve to any one whom you shall think more worthy of it than me : name him, and I will withdraw. But if you persist in your former oaths, let us fight together to save our country, or let us perish along with it.” I appeal to the dividing powers, whether so generous a step would not have saved Poland from ruin, and its prince from the disgrace of having been its last sovereign. But fate hath determined the matter otherwise. May this crime of ambition turn out to the advantage of mankind ; and by prudently recurring to the sound principles of good policy, may the usurpers break the chains of the most laborious part of their new subjects ! These people, become less unhappy, will be more intelligent, more active, more affectionate, and more faithful.

In a monarchy, the forces and wills of every individual are at the disposal of one single man ; in the government of Germany, each separate state constitutes a body. This is, perhaps, the nation that resembles most what it formerly was. The ancient Germans, divided into colonies by immense forests, had no occasion for a very refined legislation. But in proportion as their descendants have multiplied and come nearer each other, art has kept up in this country what nature had established,—the separation of the people and their political union. The small states that compose this confederate republic preserve the character of the first families. Each particular government is not always parental, or the rulers of the nations are not always mild and humane. But still reason and liberty, which unite the chiefs to each other, soften the severity of their dispositions and the rigour of their authority : a prince in Germany cannot be a tyrant with the same security as in large monarchies.

The Germans, who are rather warriors than a warlike people, because they are rather proficient in the art of war than addicted to it from inclination, have been conquered but once ; and it was Charlemagne who conquered,

but could not reduce them to subjection. They obeyed the man, who, by talents superior to the age he lived in, had subdued and enlightened its barbarism; but they shook off the yoke of his successors. They preserved, however, the title of emperor to their chief; but it was merely a name, since, in fact, the power resided, almost entirely in the barons who possessed the lands. The people, who in all countries have unfortunately always been enslaved, spoiled, and kept in a state of misery and ignorance, each the effect of the other, reaped no advantage from the legislation: This subverted that social equality which does not tend to reduce all conditions and estates to the same degree, but to a more general diffusion of property; and upon its ruins was formed the feudal government, the characteristic of which is anarchy. Every nobleman lived in a total independence, and each people under the most absolute tyranny. This was the unavoidable consequence of a government where the crown was elective. In those states where it was hereditary, the people had at least a bulwark and a permanent refuge against oppression: The regal authority could not extend itself, without alleviating for some time the fate of the vassals, by diminishing the power of the nobles.

But in Germany, where the nobles took advantage of each interregnum to invade and to restrain the rights of the imperial power, the government could not but degenerate. Superior force decided every dispute between those who could appeal to the sword. Countries and people were only the causes or the objects of war between the proprietors. Crimes were the support of injustice. Rapine, murder, and conflagrations, not only became frequent, but even lawful. Superstition, which had consecrated tyranny, was compelled to restrain it. The church, which afforded an asylum to banditti of every kind, established a truce between them. The protection of saints was implored to escape the fury of the nobles. The ashes of the dead were only sufficient to awe the ferociousness of these people; so alarming are the terrors of the grave, even to men of cruel and savage dispositions.

When the minds of men, kept in constant alarm, were disposed to tranquillity through fear, policy, which avails itself equally of reason and the passions, of ignorance and

understanding, to rule over mankind, attempted to reform the government. On the one hand, several inhabitants in the countries were enfranchised; and on the other, exemptions were granted in favour of the cities. A number of men in all parts were made free. The emperors, who, to secure their election even among ignorant and ferocious princes, were obliged to discover some abilities and some virtues, prepared the way for the improvement of the legislation.

Maximilian improved the means of happiness which time and particular events had concurred to produce in his age. He put an end to the anarchy of the great. In France and Spain, they had been made subject to regal authority; in Germany, the emperors made them submit to the authority of the laws. For the sake of the public tranquillity, every prince is amenable to justice. It is true, that these laws established among princes, who may be considered as lions, do not save the people, who may be compared to lambs: they are still at the mercy of their rulers, who are only bound one towards another. But as public tranquillity cannot be violated, nor war commenced, without the prince who is the cause of it being subject to the penalties of a tribunal that is always open, and supported by all the forces of the empire, the people are less exposed to those sudden irruptions, and unforeseen hostilities, which, threatening the property of the sovereigns, continually endangered the lives and safety of the subjects.

Why should not Europe be one day entirely subject to the same form of government? Why should there not be the ban of Europe, as there is the ban of the empire? Why should not the princes composing such a tribunal, the authority of which should be consented to by all, and maintained unanimously against any one refractory member, realise the beautiful visionary system of the Abbé St. Pierre? Why should not the complaints of the subjects be carried to this tribunal, as well as the complaints of one sovereign against another? Then would wisdom reign upon the earth.

While this perpetual peace, which hath been so long wished for, and which is still at such a distance, is expected, war, which formerly established right, is now subject to conditions that moderates its fury. The claims of huma-

nity are heard even in the midst of carnage. Thus Europe is indebted to Germany for the improvement of the legislation in all states; regularity and forms even in the revenge of nations; a certain equity even in the abuse of power; moderation in the midst of victory; a check to the ambition of all potentates; in a word, fresh obstacles to war, and fresh encouragements to peace.

This happy constitution of the German empire has improved with the progress of reason ever since the reign of Maximilian. Nevertheless, the Germans themselves complain, that, although they form a national body, distinguished by the same name, speaking the same language, living under the same chief, enjoying the same privileges, and connected by the same interests, yet their empire has not the advantage of that tranquillity, that power and consideration, which it ought to have.

The causes of this misfortune are obvious. The first is the obscurity of the laws. The writings upon the *jus publicum* of Germany are numberless; and there are but few Germans who are versed in the constitution of their country. All the members of the empire now send their representatives to the national assembly, whereas they formerly sat there themselves. The military turn, which is become universal, has precluded all application to business, suppressed every generous sentiment of patriotism, and all attachment to fellow-citizens. There is not one of the princes who has not settled his court too magnificently for his income, and who does not authorise the most flagrant oppressions to support this ridiculous pomp. In short, nothing contributes to the decay of the empire so much as the too extensive dominion of some of its princes. The sovereigns, become too powerful, separate their private interest from the general good. This reciprocal disunion among the states, is the reason that, in dangers which are common to all, each province is left to itself. It is obliged to submit to that prince, whoever he may be, whose power is superior; and thus the Germanic constitution degenerates insensibly into slavery or tyranny.

Great Britain was but little known before the Romans had carried their arms there. After these proud conquerors had forsaken it, as well as the other provinces distant from their dominion, in order to defend the centre of their

empire against the barbarians, it became the prey of the inhabitants of the Baltic sea. The natives of the country were massacred; and upon their remains several sovereignties were founded, which were in time united into one. The principles by which the Anglo Saxons were guided have never been handed down to us; but we know, that, like all the northern nations, they had a king and a body of nobility.

William subdued the southern part of the island, which even at that time was called England, and established a feudal government in it, but very different from that which was seen in the rest of Europe. In other parts, government was nothing but a labyrinth without an issue, a perpetual anarchy, and the right of the strongest. This terrible conqueror established it upon a more respectable, a more regular, and a more permanent footing, reserving to himself exclusively the right of hunting and of war, the power of levying taxes, the advantage of having a court of justice, where civil or criminal causes of all the orders of the state were ultimately adjudged by him and by the great officers of his crown, whom he appointed or dismissed at pleasure.

As long as the tyrant lived, the conquered people, and the foreigners whom he had employed to subdue them, submitted to this harsh yoke, as it were, almost unanimously, and without murmuring openly. Afterwards, both the one and the other, being accustomed to a more moderate authority, endeavoured to recover some of their primitive rights. Despotism was so firmly established, as to render it impossible to subvert it, without the most complete unanimity. Accordingly, a league was formed, in which all the citizens without distinction, either of glemen or of peasants, of inhabitants of towns or of the country, united their resentments and their interests. This universal confederacy softened a little the destiny of the nation under the reigns of the two first Henrys; but it was not till during that of John that it truly recovered its liberty. Fortunately this turbulent, cruel, ignorant, and dissipated, monarch, was compelled, by force of arms, to grant that famous charter, which abolished the most oppressive of the feudal laws, and secured to the vassals, respecting their lords, the same rights as were confirmed to

the lords in regard to kings; which put all persons, and every species of property, under the protection of peers and of juries, and which, even in favour of the vassals, diminished the oppression of slavery.

This arrangement suspended for a short time the jealousy subsisting between the barons and the princes, without extinguishing entirely the source of it. The wars began again, and the people availed themselves of the idea they had given of their strength and courage during these commotions, in order to gain admission into parliament under Edward I. Their deputies, it is true, had at first no more than the rights of representation in this assembly; but this success was the prelude to other advantages, and accordingly the commons soon determined the subsidies, and made part of the legislation; they even soon acquired the prerogative of impeaching and bringing to judgment those ministers who had abused the authority they were intrusted with.

The nation had gradually reduced the power of the chiefs to what it ought to be, when it became engaged in long and obstinate wars against France, and when the pretensions of the houses of York and Lancaster made all England a scene of carnage and of desolation. During these dreadful commotions the din of arms alone was heard. The laws were silent, and they did not even recover the least part of their force when the storms were appeased. Tyranny was exerted with so many atrocious acts, that citizens of all ranks gave up every idea of general liberty in order to attend only to their personal safety. This cruel despotism, lasted more than a century. Elizabeth herself, whose administration might, in several respects, serve as a model, always conducted herself according to principles entirely arbitrary.

James I apparently recalled to the minds of the people those rights which they seemed to have forgotten; less wise than his predecessors, who had contented themselves with tacitly enjoying unlimited power, and, as it were, under the veil of mystery, this prince, deceived by the name of monarchy, encouraged in his illusion by his courtiers and his clergy, openly avowed his pretensions with a degree of blind simplicity, of which there had been no ex-

ample. The doctrine of passive obedience, issued from the throne, and taught in the churches, diffused universal alarm.

At this period, liberty, that idol of elevated minds, which renders them ferocious in a savage state, and haughty in a civilized one, liberty, which had reigned, in the breasts of the English at a time even when they were but imperfectly acquainted with its advantages, inflamed the minds of all men. In the reign of this first of the Stuarts, however, it was only a perpetual struggle between the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the citizens. Opposition appeared under another aspect in the reign of the obstinate successor of this weak despot. Arms became the sole arbiter of these great concerns, and the nation shewed, that in combating formerly for the choice of their tyrants, they had paved the way for destroying them, punishing, and expelling, them at another time.

To put an end to the spirit of revenge and mistrust, which would have been perpetuated between the king and the people as long as the Stuarts had occupied the throne, the English chose from a foreign race, a prince who was obliged to accept at last of that social compact of which all hereditary monarchs affect to be ignorant. William III received the crown on certain conditions, and contented himself with an authority established upon the same basis as the rights of the people. Since a parliamentary claim is become the sole foundation of royalty, the conventions have not been infringed.

The government is formed between absolute monarchy, which is tyranny; democracy, which tends to anarchy; and aristocracy, which, fluctuating between one and the other, falls into the errors of both. The mixed government of the English, combining the advantages of these three powers, which mutually observe, moderate, assist, and check, each other, tends from its very principles to the national good. These several springs, by their action and reaction, form an equilibrium from which liberty arises. This constitution, of which there is no instance among the ancients, and which ought to serve as a model to all people, whose geographical position will admit of it, will last for a long time, because at its origin, which is usually the

work of commotions, of manners, and of transient opinions, it became the work of reason and experience.

The first fortunate singularity in the constitution of Great Britain, is to have a king. Most of the republican states known in history, had formerly annual chiefs. This continual change of magistrates proved an inexhaustible source of intrigues and confusion, and kept up a continual commotion in the minds of men. By creating one very great citizen England hath prevented the rising up of many. By this stroke of wisdom those dissensions have been prevented, which in all popular associations have induced the ruin of liberty, and the real enjoyment of this first of blessings before it had been lost.

The royal authority in England is not only for life, but is also hereditary. At first sight, nothing appears more advantageous for a nation than the right of choosing its masters. An inexhaustible source of talents and virtues seems to spring from this brilliant prerogative. This would indeed be the case, if the crown were necessarily to devolve to the citizen most worthy to wear it. But this is a chimerical idea, disproved by the experience of all people and of all ages. A throne hath always appeared to the eyes of ambition, of too great a value to be the appurtenance of merit alone. Those who aspire to it have always had recourse to intrigue, to corruption, and to force. Their competition hath excited at every vacancy a civil war, the greatest of political calamities, and the person who hath obtained the preference over his competitors, hath been nothing more during the course of his reign but the tyrant of the people, or the slave of those to whom he owed his elevation. The Britons are therefore to be commended for having averted from themselves these calamities, by putting the reins of government into the hands of a family that had merited and obtained their confidence.

It was proper to secure to the chief of the state a revenue sufficient to support the dignity of his rank. Accordingly, at his accession to the throne, an annual subsidy is granted to him for his own life, fit for a great king, and worthy of an opulent nation. But this concession is not to be made till after a strict examination of the state of public affairs; after the abuses which might have introduced themselves in preceding reigns have been reformed, and

after the constitution hath been brought back to its true principles. By this management England hath obtained an advantage which all free governments had endeavoured to procure to themselves, that is to say, a periodical reformation.

To assign to the monarch that kind of authority best calculated for the good of the people, was not so easy a matter. All histories attest, that wherever the executive power hath been divided, the minds of men have always been agitated with endless hatred and jealousies, and that a sanguinary contest hath always tended to the ruin of the laws and to the establishment of the strongest power. This consideration determined the English to confer on the king alone this species of power, which is nothing when it is divided; since there is then neither that harmony, nor that secrecy, nor that dispatch, which can alone impart energy to it.

From this great prerogative necessarily follows the disposal of the forces of the republic. The abuses of them would have been difficult in times when the militia were but seldom assembled, and only for a few months, and when therefore they had no time to lose that attachment they owed to their country. But since all the princes of Europe have contracted the ruinous habit of maintaining, even in time of peace, a standing army of mercenary troops, and since the safety of Great Britain hath required that she should conform to this fatal custom, the danger is become greater, and it has been necessary to increase the precautions. The nation alone hath the power of assembling the troops; she never settles them for more than a year, and the taxes established for the payment of them have only the same duration. So that if this mode of defence, which circumstances have induced to think necessary, should threaten liberty, it would never be long before the troubles would be put an end to.

A still firmer support to the English liberty, is the division of the legislative power. Wherever the monarch can establish or abolish laws at pleasure there is no government; the prince is a despot, and the people are slaves. If the legislative power be divided, a well-regulated constitution will scarce ever be corrupted, and that only for a short time. From the fear of being suspected of ignorance

or corruption, neither of the parties would venture to make dangerous proposals, and if either of them should, it would disgrace itself to no purpose. In this arrangement of things, the greatest inconvenience that can happen, is that a good law should be rejected, or that it should not be adopted so soon as the greatest possible good might require. The portion of the legislative power which the people have recovered, is insured to them by the exclusive regulation they have of the taxes. Every state hath both customary and contingent wants. Neither the one nor the other can be provided for any otherwise than by taxes, and in Great Britain the sovereign cannot exact one. He can only address himself to the commons, who order what they think most suitable to the national interest, and who, after having regulated the taxes, have an account given to them of the use they have been put to.

It is not the multitude who exercise these inestimable prerogatives, which their courage and their perseverance have procured to them. This order of things, which may be proper for feeble associations, would necessarily have subverted every thing in a great state. Representatives, chosen by the people themselves, and whose destiny is connected with theirs, reflect, speak, and act for them. As it was possible, however, that, either from indolence, weakness, or corruption, these representatives might fail in the most august and the most important of duties, the remedy of this great evil hath been found in the right of election. As soon as the time of the commission expires, the electors are assembled. They grant their confidence again to those who have shewn themselves worthy of it, and they reject with disdain those who have betrayed it. As a discernment of this kind is not above the abilities of common men, because it depends upon facts, which are usually very simple, those disorders are thus terminated which did not derive their source from the effects of government, but from the particular dispositions of those who directed its operations.

Nevertheless, there might result from this division of power between the king and the people a continual struggle, which, in process of time, might have brought on either a republic or slavery. To prevent this inconvenience, an intermediate body hath been established, which must be

equally apprehensive of both these revolutions. This is the order of the nobility, destined to lean to the side which might become the weakest, and thus ever to maintain the equilibrium. The constitution, indeed, hath not given them the same degree of authority as to the commons; but the splendour of hereditary dignity, the privileges of a seat in the house of peers, belonging to themselves and without election, together with some other prerogatives of honour, have been contrived to substitute as much as possible to what they wanted in real strength.

But if, notwithstanding so many precautions, it should at length happen, that some ambitious and enterprising monarch should wish to reign without his parliament, or to compel them to agree to his arbitrary decisions, the only resource remaining to the nation would be resistance.

It was upon a system of passive obedience, of divine right, and of power not to be dissolved, that the regal authority was formerly supported. These absurd and fatal prejudices had subdued all Europe, when in 1688, the English precipitated from the throne a superstitious, persecuting, and despotic, prince. Then it was understood, that the people did not belong to their chiefs; then the necessity of an equitable government among mankind was incontestibly established; then were the foundations of societies settled; then the legitimate right of defence, the last resource of nations that are oppressed, was incontrovertibly fixed. At this memorable period, the doctrine of resistance, which had till then been only one act of violence opposed to other acts of violence, was avowed in England by the law itself.

But how is it possible to render this great principle useful and efficient? Will a single citizen, left to his own strength, ever venture to strive against the power, always formidable, of those who govern? Will he not necessarily be crushed by their intrigues, or by their oppression? This would undoubtedly be the case, were it not for the indefinite liberty of the press. By this fortunate expedient, the actions of the depositaries of authority become public. Any vexations or outrages that have been committed over the most obscure individual, are soon brought to light. His cause becomes the cause of all; and the oppressors are punished, or satisfaction is only offered for the injury, ac-

according to the nature of the offence, or the disposition of the people.

This description of the British constitution, made without art, must have convinced all persons of a proper way of thinking, that there hath never been a constitution so well regulated upon the face of the globe. We shall be confirmed in this opinion, when we consider that the most important affairs have always been publicly canvassed in the senate of the nation, without any real mischief having ever resulted from it. Other powers think they stand in need of the veil of mystery, to cover their operations. Secrecy appears to them essential to their preservation, or to their prosperity. They endeavour to conceal their situation, their projects, and their alliances, from their enemies, from their rivals, and even from their friends. The quality of being impenetrable is the greatest praise they think they can bestow upon a statesman. In England, the internal, as well as external, proceedings of government, are all open, all exposed to the face of day. How noble and confident it is, in a nation, to admit the universe to its deliberations ! How honest and advantageous it is, to admit all the citizens to them ! Never hath Europe been told, in a more energetic manner,—“ we do not fear thee.” Never hath it been said, with more confidence and justice, to any nation,—“ try us, and see whether we be not faithful depositaries of your interests, of your glory, and of your happiness.” The empire is constituted with sufficient strength, to resist the shocks which are inseparable from such a custom, and to give this advantage to neighbours who may not be favourably inclined.

But is this government a perfect one ? Certainly not ; because there is not, neither can there be, any thing perfect in this world. In a matter so complicated, how is it possible to foresee and to obviate every thing ? Perhaps, in order that the chief of the nation should be as dependent upon the will of the people, as would be suitable to their security, liberty, and happiness, it would be necessary that this chief should have no property out of his kingdom. Otherwise the good of one country happening to clash with that of the other, the interests of the precarious sovereignty will often be sacrificed to those of the hereditary sovereignty ; otherwise, the enemies of the state will have

two powerful means of molesting it ; sometimes by intimidating the king of Great Britain, by threats addressed to the elector of Hanover ; sometimes by engaging the king in fatal wars, which they will prolong at pleasure ; sometimes by compelling the elector to put an end to these hostilities by a shameful peace. Will the nation meanly abandon the king in quarrels that are foreign to them ? and if they should interfere, will it not be at their expence, at the loss of their revenues and of their population ? Who knows whether the danger of the foreign sovereign will not render him base, and even treacherous, to the national sovereign ? In this case, the British nation could do nothing better than to say to their sovereign,—“ either resign your
“ sovereignty or your electorate ; abdicate the dominions
“ you hold from your ancestors, if you mean to keep those
“ you hold from us.

A constitution in which the legislative and executive power are separate, bears within itself the seeds of perpetual contest. It is impossible that peace should reign between two opposite political bodies. Prerogative must endeavour to extend itself, and press upon liberty, and *vice versa*.

Whatever admiration we may have for a government, if it can only preserve itself by the same means by which it had been established ; if its future history must exhibit the same scenes as the past, such as rebellion, civil wars, destruction of the people, the assassination or expulsion of kings, a state of perpetual alarms and commotions, who would wish for a government upon such conditions ? If peace, both within and without, be the object of administration, what shall we think of an order of things that is incompatible with it ?

Would it not be to be wished, that the number of representatives should be proportioned to the value of property, and to the exact ratio of patriotism ? Is it not absurd that a poor hamlet, or a wretched village, should depute as many or more members to the assembly of the commons, as the most opulent city or district ? What interest can these men take in the public felicity, which they scarce partake of ? What facility will not bad ministers find in their indigence to bribe them ; and to obtain, by money, that majority they stand in need of. O, shame ! The rich man

purchases the suffrages of his constituents, to obtain the honour of representing them ; and the court buys the vote of the representative, in order to govern with more despotic sway. Would not a prudent nation endeavour to prevent both the one and other of these corruptions ? Is it not surprising that this hath not been done upon the day, when a representative had the impudence to make his constituents wait in his antichamber, and afterwards say to them : “ I know not what you want, but I will only “ act as I think proper ; I have bought you very dear, “ and I am resolved to sell you as dear as I can : or even upon that day, when the minister boasted of having in his pocket-book the rates of every man’s probity in England ?

Is there nothing to object against the effort of these three powers, acting perpetually one upon the other, and tending incessantly to an equilibrium which they will never obtain ? This struggle, is it not somewhat similar to a continual anarchy ? Doth it not endanger commotions, in which, from one moment to another, the blood of the citizens may be spilt, without our being able to foresee whether the advantage will remain on the side of tyranny or on that of liberty ? And if all circumstances be well weighed, would not a nation less independent and more quiet be happy ?

These defects, and others added to them, will they not one day bring on the decline of the government ? This is a circumstance we cannot decide ; but we are convinced it would be a great misfortune for the nations, since they all owe to it a milder destiny than that which they before enjoyed. The example of a free, rich, magnanimous, and happy people, in the midst of Europe, hath engaged the attention of all men. The principles from which many benefits have been derived, have been adopted, discussed, and presented to the monarchs, and to their delegates ; who, to avoid being accused of tyranny, have been obliged to adopt them, with more or less modification. The ancient maxims would soon be revived, if there did not exist, as it were, in the midst of us, a perpetual tribunal, which demonstrated the depravity and absurdity of them.

But, if the enjoyments of luxury should happen totally to pervert the morals of the nation ; if the love of pleasure should soften the courage of the commanders and officers

of the fleets and armies; if the intoxication of temporary successes, if vain ideas of false greatness, should excite the nation to enterprises above their strength; if they should be deceived in the choice of their enemies, or their allies; if they should lose their colonies, either by making them too extensive, or by laying restraints upon them; if their love of patriotism be not exalted to the love of humanity; they will, sooner or latter, be enslaved, and return to that kind of insignificance from whence they emerged only through torrents of blood, and through the calamities of two ages of fanaticism and war. They will become like other nations whom they despise, and Europe will not be able to shew the universe one nation in which she can venture to pride herself. Despotism, which always oppresses most heavily minds that are subdued and degraded, will alone rise superior, amidst the ruin of arts, of morals, of reason, and of liberty.

The history of the United provinces is replete with very singular events. Their combination arose from despair, and almost all Europe encouraged their establishment. They had but just triumphed over the long and powerful efforts of the court of Spain to reduce them to subjection, when they were obliged to try their strength against the Britons, and disconcerted the schemes of France. They afterwards gave a king to England, and deprived Spain of the provinces she possessed in Italy and the Low countries, to give them to Austria. Since that period, Holland has been disgusted of such a system of politics, as would engage her in war; she attends solely to the preservation of her constitution, but, perhaps, not with sufficient zeal, care, and integrity.

The constitution of Holland, though previously modelled on a plan that was the result of reflection, is not less defective than those which have been formed by chance. One of its principal defects is, that the sovereignty is too much divided.

It is a mistake to suppose that the authority resides in the states general fixed at the Hague. The fact is, that the power of the members who compose this assembly consists only in deciding upon matters of form, or police. In alliances, peace, war, new taxes, or any other important matter, each of the deputies must receive the orders of his

province; which is itself obliged to obtain the consent of the cities. The consequence of this complicated order of things is, that the resolutions, which would require the greatest secrecy and celerity, are necessarily tardy and public.

It seems, that in an union contracted between this number of states, independent of each other, and connected only by their common interest, each of them ought to have had an influence proportioned to its extent, to its population, and to its riches: but this fortunate basis, which enlightened reason ought to have founded, is not adopted by the confederate body. The province which bears more than half of the public expences hath no more votes than that which contributes only one hundredth part of them; and in that province, a petty town, uninhabited and unknown, hath legally the same weight as this unparalleled city, the activity and industry of which are a subject of astonishment and of jealousy to all nations.

The unanimity of the towns and provinces, which is required for all important resolutions, is not a measure of more judicious policy. If the most considerable members of the republic should resolve to act without the concurrence of the less important branches, this would be a manifest infringement of the principles of the union; and if they should lay a great stress upon obtaining their suffrages, they will not succeed without much solicitation or concessions. Whichever of these two expedients have been adopted, when the parties have differed, the harmony of the United states hath usually been disturbed, and frequently in a violent and permanent manner.

The imperfections of such a constitution did not, in all probability, escape the prince of Orange, the founder of this republic. If this great man permitted that they should serve as a basis to the government which was establishing, it was undoubtedly in hopes that they would render the election of a stadtholder necessary, and that this supreme magistrate would always be chosen in his family. This view of a profound ambition hath not always been attended with success; and this singular magistracy, which united to the absolute disposal of the land and sea forces several other important prerogatives, hath been twice abolished.

At these periods, which are remarkable in the history

of a state, unparalleled in the annals of the Old and of the New World, great changes have been produced. The authors of the revolution have boldly divided all the authority among themselves. An intolerable tyranny hath been everywhere established, with more or less effrontery. Under pretence that the general assemblies were tumultuous, fatiguing, and dangerous, the people have no longer been called in to elect the depositaries of the public authority. The burgomasters have chosen their sheriffs, and have seized upon the finances, of which they give no account, but to their equals or constituents. The senators have arrogated to themselves the right of completing their own body. Thus the magistracy hath been confined to a few families, who have assumed an almost exclusive right of deputation to the states general. Each province and each town have been at the disposal of a small number of citizens, who, dividing the rights and the spoils of the people, have had the art of eluding their complaints, or of preventing the effects of any extraordinary discontent. The government is become almost aristocratic. Had the reformation been extended only to what was defective in the constitution, the house of Orange might have apprehended that they should no more be reinstated in that degree of splendour from which they had fallen. A less disinterested conduct hath occasioned the restoration of the stadtholdership; and it hath been made hereditary even in the female line.

But will this dignity become in time an instrument of oppression? Enlightened men do not think it possible. Rome, say they, is always quoted as an example to all our free states, that have no circumstance in common with it. If the dictator became the oppressor of that republic, it was in consequence of its having oppressed all other nations; it was because its power, having been originally founded by war, must necessarily be destroyed by it; and because a nation composed of soldiers could not escape the despotism of a military government. However improbable it may appear, it is yet certain, that the Roman republic submitted to the yoke, because it paid no taxes. The conquered people were the only tributaries to the treasury. The public revenues, therefore, necessarily remaining the same after the revolution as before, property did not ap-

pear to be attacked ; and the citizen thought he should be still free enough, while he had the disposal of his own.

Holland, on the contrary, will maintain its liberty, because it is subject to very considerable taxes. The Dutch cannot preserve their country without great expences. The sense of their independence alone excites an industry proportionable to the load of their contributions, and to the patience necessary to support the burthen of them. If to the enormous expences of the state it were necessary to add those which the pomp of a court requires ; if the prince were to employ in maintaining the agents of tyranny what ought to be bestowed on the foundations of a land obtained, as it were, from the sea, he would soon drive the people to despair.

The inhabitant of Holland, placed upon a mountain, and who observes at a distance the sea rising eighteen or twenty feet above the level of the lands, and, dashing its waves against the dikes he has raised, considers within himself, that sooner or later this boisterous element will get the better of him. He disdains so precarious a dwelling ; and his house, made either of wood or stone at Amsterdam, is no longer looked upon as such : it is his ship that is his asylum ; and by degrees he acquires an indifference and manners conformable to this idea. The water is to him what the vicinity of volcanoes is to other people.

If to these natural causes of the decay of a patriotic spirit were joined the loss of liberty, the Dutch would quit a country that cannot be cultivated but by men who are free ; and these people, so devoted to trade, would carry their spirit of commerce, together with their riches, to some other part of the globe. Their islands in Asia, their factories in Africa, their colonies in America, and all the ports in Europe, would afford them an asylum. What stadtholder, what prince, revered by such a people, would wish, or dare, to become their tyrant ?

A senseless ambitious man, or a ferocious warrior, might possibly attempt it. But among those who are destined to govern the nation, are such men rarely to be found. Everything seems to conspire in exciting the greatest apprehensions in the republic upon this important point. There are scarce any natives on-board their fleets, except a few officers. Their armies are composed of, recruited, and

commanded by, foreigners, devoted to a chief, who, according to their ideas, can never arm them against people to whom they are attached by no tie. The fortresses of the state are all governed by generals who acknowledge no other laws beside those of the prince. Courtiers degraded in their character, overwhelmed with debts, destitute of virtue, and interested in the subversion of the established order, are perpetually raised to the most important posts. It is by favour, that a set of commanders, devoid of shame and of ability, have been placed, and are maintained, in the colonies; men who, either from motives of gratitude or of cupidity, are inclined to accomplish the slavery of those distant regions.

Against so many dangers, of what avail can be the general lethargy, the thirst of riches, the taste for luxury, which begins to insinuate itself, the spirit of trade, and the perpetual condescensions shewn for an hereditary authority? According to every probability, the United provinces, without effusion of blood, and without commotion, must insensibly fall under the yoke of a monarchy. As the spirit of despotism, or the desire of meeting with no opposition to our wishes, is inherent in the mind of every man in a greater or less degree, some stadtholder may arise, and perhaps soon, who, regardless of the fatal consequences of his enterprise, will enslave the nation. It concerns the Dutch attentively to consider these observations.

The Roman empire was shaking on all sides, when the Germans entered into Gaul, under the guidance of a chief whom they had chosen themselves, and to whom they were rather companions than subjects. This was not an army, the ambition of which was limited to the seizing of some fortified places; it was the irruption of a people in search of a settlement. As they attacked none but slaves, dissatisfied with their fate, or masters enervated by the luxuries of a long peace, they met with no very obstinate resistance. The conquerors appropriated to themselves the lands which suited them, and separated soon after, in order to enjoy their fortune in peace.

The division was not the work of blind chance. The possessions were settled by the general assembly, and they were enjoyed under its authority. They were granted at first for no more than one year; but this period was gra-

dually prolonged, and was at last extended to the life of the possessor. Matters were carried still further, when the springs of government became entirely relaxed; and under the feeble descendants of Charlemagne, hereditary possession was almost generally established. This usurpation was consecrated by a solemn convention, at the accession of Hugo Capet to the throne; and at that period the feudal tenure, that most destructive of all rights, prevailed in all its force.

France was then no more than an assemblage of petty sovereignties, situated near each other, but without having any connection. In this state of anarchy, the lords entirely independent of the apparent chief of the nation, oppressed their subjects, or their slaves, at pleasure. If the monarch interested himself in the fate of these unhappy people, they declared war against him; and if these people themselves sometimes ventured to appeal to the rights of mankind, the consequence was, that the chains with which they were crushed became still more oppressive.

In the meanwhile, the extinction of some powerful houses, together with various treaties and conquests, were successively adding to the royal domain territories of greater or less extent. This acquisition of several provinces gave to the crown a mass of power, which imparted to it some degree of energy. A perpetual contest between the kings and the nobles, an alternate superiority of the power of one single person, or of several; such was the kind of anarchy that lasted, almost without interruption, till about the middle of the fifteenth century.

The character of the French was then changed by a train of events which had altered the form of government. The war which the English, in conjunction with, or under the direction of, the Normans, had incessantly carried on against France for two or three hundred years past, spread a general alarm, and occasioned great ravages. The triumphs of the enemy, the tyranny of the great, all conspired to make the nation wish that the prince might be invested with power sufficient to expel foreigners out of the kingdom, and to keep the nobles in subjection. While princes, distinguished by their wisdom and bravery, were endeavouring to accomplish this great work, a new generation arose. Every individual, when the general alarm was

past, thought himself happy enough in the privileges his ancestors had enjoyed. They neglected to trace the source of the power of kings, which was derived from the nation; and Lewis XI, having few obstacles to surmount, became more powerful than his predecessors.

Before his time, the history of France presents us with an account of a variety of states, sometimes divided and sometimes united. Since that prince's reign, it is the history of a great monarchy. The power of several tyrants is centered in one person. The people are not more free; but the constitution is different. Peace is enjoyed with greater security within, and war carried on with more vigour without.

Civil wars, which tend to make a free people become slaves, and to restore liberty to a nation that is already enslaved, have had no other effect in France than that of humbling the great, without exalting the people. The ministers, who will always be the creatures of the prince, while the general sense of the nation has no influence in affairs of government, have sold their fellow-citizens to their master; and as the people, who were possessed of nothing, could not be losers by this servitude, the kings have found it the more easy to carry their designs into execution, especially as they were always concealed under pretence of political advantage, and even of alleviating the burthen of the people. The jealousy excited by a great inequality of conditions and fortunes, hath favoured every scheme that tended to aggrandise the regal authority. The princes have had the art to engage the attention of the people, sometimes by wars abroad, sometimes by religious disputes at home; to suffer the minds of men to be divided by opinions, and their hearts by different interests; to excite and keep up jealousies between the several ranks of the state; to flatter alternately each party with an appearance of favour, and to satisfy the natural envy of the people by the depression of them all. The multitude, reduced to poverty, and become the objects of contempt, having seen all-powerful bodies brought low one after another, have at least loved in their monarch the enemy of their enemies.

The nation, though by inadvertency it has lost the privilege of governing itself, has not, however, submitted to

all the outrages of despotism. This arises from the loss of its liberty not having been the effect of a tumultuous and sudden revolution, but gradually brought about in a succession of several ages. The national character, which hath always influenced the princes as well as the court, if it were only by means of the women, hath established a sort of balance of power; and thus it is that polite manners having tempered the exertion of force, and softened the opposition that might be made to it, have prevented those sudden and violent commotions, from whence results either monarchical tyranny or popular liberty.

Inconstitence, as natural to the minds of a gay and lively people as it is to children, hath fortunately prevailed over the systems of some despotic ministers. Kings have been too fond of pleasure, and too conversant with the real source of it, not to be induced frequently to lay aside the iron sceptre, which would have terrified the people, and prevented them from indulging in those frivolous amusements to which they were addicted. The spirit of intrigue, which hath ever prevailed among them, since the nobles have been invited to court, hath occasioned continual removals of statesmen, and consequently subverted all their projects. As the change in government has been imperceptibly brought about, the subjects have preserved a kind of dignity, which the monarch himself seemed to respect, considering it as the source or consequence of his own. He has continued the supreme legislator for a long time, without being either willing or able to abuse his whole power. Kept in awe by the bare idea only of the fundamental laws of the nation he governed, he has frequently been afraid to act contrary to the principles of them. He has been sensible that the people had right to oppose to him. In a word, there has been no tyrant, even at a time when there was no liberty.

Such, and still more arbitrary, have been the governments of Spain and Portugal, of Naples and Piedmont, and of the several small principalities of Italy. The people of the south, whether from inactivity of mind, or weakness of body, seem to be born for despotism. The Spaniards, though they are extremely proud, and the Italians, notwithstanding all the powers of genius they possess, have lost all their rights, and every idea of liberty. Wherever

the monarchy is unlimited, it is impossible to ascertain, with any degree of precision, what the form of government is, since that varies, not only with the character of each sovereign, but even at every period of the same prince's life. These states have written laws and customs, and societies that enjoy certain privileges; but when the legislator can subvert the laws and tribunals of justice; when his authority is founded only on superior strength, and when he calls upon God with a view to inspire his subjects with fear, instead of imitating him in order to become an object of affection; when the original right of society, the unalienable right of property among citizens, when national conventions and the engagements of the prince are in vain appealed to; in a word, when the government is arbitrary, there is no longer any state; the nation is no more than the landed property of one single individual.

In such countries, no statesmen will ever be formed. Far from its being a duty to be acquainted with public affairs, it is rather criminal and dangerous to have any knowledge of the administration. The favour of the court, the choice of the prince, supply the place of talents. Talents, it is true, have their use; and are sometimes of use to serve the designs of others, but never to command. In these countries, the people submit to the government their superiors impose, provided only they are indulged in their natural indolence. There is only one system of legislation in these delightful regions of Europe that merits our attention, which is the republic of Venice. Three great phenomena make this state remarkable; these are, its first foundation, its power at the time of the crusades, and its present form of administration.

A great, magnificent, and rich, city, impregnable, though without walls or fortifications, rules over seventy-two islands. They are not rocks and mountains raised by time in the midst of a vast sea, but rather a plain, parcelled out and cut into channels by the stagnations of a small gulf, upon the slope of a low land. These islands, separated by canals, are at present joined by bridges. They have been formed by the ravages of the sea, and the ravages of war have occasioned them to be peopled towards the middle of the fifth century. The inhabitants of Italy, flying from Attila, sought an asylum on the sea.

The Venetian Lagunes at first neither made a part of the same city, nor of the same republic. United by one general commercial interest, or rather by the necessity of defending themselves, they were, however, divided into as many separate governments as islands, each subject to its respective tribune.

From the plurality of chiefs contentions arose, and the public good was consequently sacrificed. These people, therefore, in order to constitute one body, chose a prince, who, under the title of duke or doge, enjoyed for a considerable time all the rights of sovereignty, of which he only now retains the signs. These doges were elected by the people till 1173 : at that period the nobles arrogated to themselves the exclusive privilege of appointing the chief of the republic ; they seized upon the authority, and formed an aristocracy.

Those political writers who have given the preference to this kind of government, have said, with some show of reason, that all societies, in whatever way they may have been formed, have been governed in this manner. If in democratic states the people were to settle their administration themselves, they would necessarily fall into extravagancies ; and they are therefore obliged, for their own preservation, to submit to a senate, more or less numerous. If in monarchies kings pretended to see every thing with their own eyes, and to do every thing themselves, nothing would either be seen or done ; and it hath therefore been necessary to have recourse to councils, to preserve empires from a stagnation, more fatal, perhaps, than a state of action ill conducted. Every thing, therefore, may be traced to the authority of many, and of a small number ; every thing is conducted according to the principles of aristocracy.

But in the monarchical form of government, command is not settled in one class of citizens, and obedience in the rest ; the road to honours and to employments is open to every one who hath the necessary talents to obtain them ; the nobles are not every thing, and the people nothing. Substitute aristocracy to this form of government, and we shall find nothing but slavery and despotism.

Venice, in its origin, tempered as much as possible the defects of this odious and unjust government. The several branches of power were distributed and balanced with re-

markable accuracy. Prudent and severe laws were enacted, to suppress and strike awe into the ambition of the nobles. The great reigned without disturbance, and with a kind of equality, as the stars shine in the firmament amidst the silence of the night. They were obliged outwardly to conform to the customs of the several orders of the republic, in order that the distinction between patricians and plebeians might become less odious. The hope even of sharing, in process of time, the rights of sovereignty, was extended to those who from rank were excluded from it, if by their services and their industry they should one day acquire consideration and riches.

This was the only regular form of government then existing in Europe. Such an advantage raised the Venetians to great opulence, enabled them to keep armies in their pay, and imparted to them that knowledge which made them a political people, before any of the rest were. They reigned over the seas; they had a manifest preponderance in the continent; they formed or dissipated leagues, according as it suited their interest.

When the commerce of the republic was ruined by the discovery of the New World, and of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, it was deprived of every advantage which had given it grandeur, strength, and courage. To those illusions, which in some measure console the subjects for the loss of their liberty, were substituted the seduction of voluptuousness, pleasures, and effeminacy. The great grew corrupt as well as the people, the women as well as the men, the priests as well as the laymen, and licentiousness knew no bounds. Venice became the country upon the earth where there were fewer factitious vices and virtues.

In proportion as the minds, the dispositions, and the power, of man became enervated within, it was a necessary consequence that less vigour and less exertion should shew itself without. Accordingly the republic fell into the most pusillanimous circumspection. They assumed and added still more to the national character of Italy, which is jealousy and mistrust. With one half of the treasures and care which it hath cost them to maintain that neutrality they have observed for two centuries past, they would per-

haps have freed themselves for ever from the dangers to which their very precautions have exposed them.

The republic doth not appear to be in a state of tranquillity, notwithstanding all the cares that have been taken for its security. Its anxiety is manifested by the principles of its government, which become constantly more severe by the extreme horror of every thing that is in the least elevated; by the aversion which it shews for reason, the use of which it considers as a crime; by the mysterious and dark veils with which it conceals its operations; by the precaution which it constantly takes to place foreign commanders at the head of its feeble troops, and to appoint inspectors over them; by the forbidding, indiscriminately, all those who are its subjects to go and inure themselves to war in the field of battle; by its informers; by all the refinements of insidious policy; and by various other means which discover continual apprehensions and alarms. It seems to place its chief confidence in an inquisitor, who is continually prying about amongst individuals, with the axe raised over the head of any one who shall venture to disturb public order by his actions or by his discourses.

Every thing, however, is not censurable in Venice. The impost which supplies the treasury with 25,000,000 of livres [1,041,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] hath neither increased nor diminished since the year 1707. Every method is taken to conceal from the citizens the idea of their slavery, and to make them easy and cheerful. The form of worship is replete with ceremonies. There are no great festivals without public spectacles and music. One may say and do what one chooses at Venice, if one does not speak in public either of politics or of religion. A christian orator preaching before the chiefs of the republic, imagined that he ought to begin his discourse with an eulogium of the government; immediately a satellite was dispatched to take him out of his pulpit; and being the next day summoned to appear before the tribunal of the state inquisitors, he was told, "what need have we of your encomiums? be more cautious." They were well aware that an admiration is soon censured in every place where it is allowed to be extolled. The state inquisitors do not retain their functions longer than eighteen months. They are chosen from among the most moderate persons, and the least act

are better acquainted with their real interests than any other nation; and who constitute the most sensible people in all modern political states. These thirteen cantons compose among themselves, not a republic as the seven provinces of Holland, nor a simple confederacy as the Germanic body, but rather a league, a natural association of so many independent republics. Each canton has its respective sovereignty, its alliances, and its treaties, separate. The general diet cannot make laws or regulations for either of them.

The three most ancient cantons are immediately connected with each of the others. It is from this union of convenience, not of constitution, that if one of the thirteen cantons were attacked, all the rest would march to its assistance. But there is no common alliance between the whole body and each particular canton. Thus the branches of a tree are united among themselves, without having an immediate connection with the common trunk.

The union of the Switzers was, however, indissoluble till the beginning of the 16th century; when religion, which ought to be the bond of peace and charity, disunited them. The reformation caused a separation of the Helvetic body, and the state was divided by the church. All public affairs are transacted in the separate and particular diets of the catholic and protestant parties. The general diets are assembled only to preserve the appearance of union. Notwithstanding this source of discord, Switzerland has enjoyed peace much more than any state in Europe.

Under the Austrian government, oppression and the raising of troops impeded population. After the revolution, there was too great an increase of the number of people in proportion to the barrenness of the land. The Helvetic body could not be enlarged without endangering its safety, unless it made some excursions abroad. The inhabitants of these mountains, as the torrents that pour down from them, were to spread themselves in the plains that border upon the Alps. These people would have destroyed each other, had they remained sequestered among themselves. But ignorance of the arts, the want of materials for manufactures, and the deficiency of money, prevented the importation of foreign merchandize; and excluded them from the means of procuring the comforts of life, and of encouraging indus-

try. They drew even from their increase of numbers, a method of subsisting and acquiring riches, a source and an object of trade.

The duke of Milan, master of a rich country open on every side to invasion, and not easily defended, was in want of soldiers. The Switzers, who were his most powerful neighbours, must necessarily become his enemies, if they were not his allies, or rather his protectors. A kind of traffic was therefore set on foot between these people and the Milanese, in which men were bartered for riches. The nation engaged troops successively in the service of France, of the emperor, of the pope, of the duke of Savoy, and all the potentates of Italy. They sold their blood to the most distant powers, and to the nations most in enmity with each other; to Holland, to Spain, and to Portugal; as if these mountains were nothing more than a repository of arms and soldiers, open to every one who wanted to purchase the means of carrying on war.

Each canton treats with that power which offers the most advantageous terms. The subjects of the country are at liberty to engage in a war at a distance, with an allied nation. The Hollander is, by the constitution of his country, a citizen of the world; the Switzer, by the same circumstance, a destroyer of Europe. The profits of Holland are in proportion to the degree of cultivation, and the consumption of merchandize; the prosperity of Switzerland increases in proportion to the number of battles that are fought, and the slaughter that attends them.

It is by war, that calamity inseparable from mankind, whether in a state of civilization or not, that the republics of the Helvetic body are obliged to live and subsist. It is by this that they preserve a number of inhabitants within their country proportioned to the extent and fertility of their lands, without forcing any of the springs of government, or restraining the inclinations of any individual. It is by the traffic of troops with the powers at war with each other, that Switzerland has not been under the necessity of making sudden emigrations, which are the cause of invasions, and of attempting conquests, which would have occasioned the loss of its liberty, as it caused the subversion of all the republics of Greece.

As far as human foresight can penetrate into futurity, the state of these people must be more permanent than that

of all other nations, if differences in their form of worship do not become fatal to them. From the top of their barren mountains, they behold, groaning under the oppression of tyranny, whole nations which nature hath placed in more plentiful countries, while they enjoy in peace the fruits of their labour, of their frugality, of their moderation, and of all the virtues that attend upon liberty. If it were possible that habit could blunt their sensibility for so mild a destiny, it would be incessantly revived in them by that multitude of travellers who resort there to enjoy the sight of that felicity which is not to be seen elsewhere. Undoubtedly, the love of riches hath somewhat altered that amiable simplicity of manners, in such of the cantons where the arts and commerce have made any considerable progress; but the features of their primitive character are not entirely effaced, and they still retain a kind of happiness unknown to other men. Can it be apprehended that a nation may grow tired of such an existence?

The weight of taxes cannot alter the advantages of this destiny. These scourges of the human race are unknown in most of the cantons, and in the rest they amount to little or nothing. In some places only, a dangerous abuse hath been introduced. Administrators, known under the title of bailiffs, take upon themselves to impose in their own jurisdiction arbitrary fines, which they make use of for their own private benefit. This extravagance of the feudal laws cannot last, and every vestige will soon be lost of so odious a custom, which in process of time would affect the public felicity.

The nation will never be disturbed by its propensities, which naturally lead it to order, tranquillity, and harmony. If any turbulent or dangerous characters are to be found there, who may be fond of factions and tumults, they mix in foreign wars to endeavour to gratify this restless disposition.

It is not possible that the several cantons should attempt reciprocally to subdue each other. Those in which democracy is established are too feeble to conceive so unreasonable a project; and in the others, the patricians and plebeians will never unite their wishes and their exertions for an aggrandizement, the consequences of which might become fatal to one of the orders.

The tranquillity of the Helvetic body is still less in danger from their neighbours than from their citizens. As in

the disputes between crowned heads, the Swiss observe a very impartial neutrality, and as they never become guarantees of any engagement, they are not known to have any enemies. If any power should think it had a cause of complaint against them, it would stifle its resentment from the well-grounded apprehension of miscarrying in its projects of revenge against a country entirely military, and which reckons as many soldiers as men. If even it were certain of conquering them, they would never be attacked, because the blindest and most violent policy doth not exterminate a people to take possession of nothing but rocks. Such are the motives which induce us to believe in the stability of the republic of Switzerland.

It now remains that we speak of the ecclesiastical government. If the foundation of christianity presents us with a scene that astonishes the mind, the history of the revolutions in the government of the church is not less surprising. What an enormous difference is there between St. Peter, a poor fisherman, on the borders of the lake of Genesareth, and servant of the servants of God; and some of his proud successors, their brows girt with the triple crown, masters of Rome, and of a great part of Italy, and calling themselves the kings of the kings of the earth! Let us trace things up to their origin; and let us take a rapid view of the splendour and of the corruption of the church. Let us see what its government is become in the space of eighteen centuries; and let present and future sovereigns learn what they are to expect from the priesthood, the sole principle of which is to render the authority of the magistrates subordinate to the divine authority, of which it is the depositary.

In an obscure village of Judea, and in the house of a poor carpenter, there arose a man of austere morals. His candour was disgusted with the hypocrisy of the priests of his time. He had discovered the vanity of legal ceremonies, and the vice of expiations; at thirty years of age this virtuous person quitted his employment, and began to preach his opinions. The multitude, from the villages and country places, flocked around him, listened to him, and followed him. He associated to himself a small number of disciples, ignorant and weak men, taken from the lowest conditions of life. He wandered for some time about the capital, and at length ventured to appear there. One of

his disciples betrayed him, and the other denied him. He was taken up, accused of blasphemy, and crucified between two thieves. After his death his disciples appeared in the public places, and in the great cities, at Antioch, at Alexandria, and at Rome. They announced, both to barbarous and civilized people, at Athens and at Corinth, the resurrection of their Master; and the belief of their doctrine, which seemed so contrary to reason, was universally adopted. In all parts corrupt men embraced a system of morality, austere in its principles and unsocial in its councils. Persecution arose; and the preachers, together with their converts, were imprisoned, scourged, and put to death. The more blood is spilt, the more doth the sect extend itself. In less than three centuries, the temples of idolatry are subverted or abandoned; and notwithstanding the hatred, heresies, schisms, and sanguinary quarrels, which have torn christianity since its origin, even down to our latter times; yet there are scarce any altars remaining, except such as are raised to the man of God, who died upon a cross.

It was no difficult matter to demonstrate to the pagans the absurdity of their worship; and in all general, as well as particular, disputes, if we can prove that our adversary is in the wrong, he immediately concludes that we are in the right. Providence, which tends to the accomplishment of its designs by all sorts of means, intended that this mode of reasoning should lead men into the way of salvation. The founder of christianity did not arrogate to himself any authority, either over the partners of his mission, or over his followers, or over his fellow-citizens. He respected the authority of Cæsar. When he saved the life of an adulterous woman, he took care not to attack the law which condemned her to death. He referred two brothers, who were at variance concerning the division of an inheritance, to the civil tribunal. When persecuted, he suffered persecution. In the midst of intolerant persons, he recommended toleration. "You shall not," said he to his disciples, "command fire to come down from heaven upon the head of the unbeliever; you shall shake off the very dust from your feet, and you shall retire:" fastened to a cross, his head crowned with thorns, his side pierced with a spear, he said to God: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." To instruct and baptize the nations, was the object of the mission of the apostles; to employ

persuasion and not violence ; to go about in the same manner God had sent his Son,—such were the means employed for the purpose. Priesthood hath in no time conformed itself to such maxims ; and yet religion hath not been the less prosperous.

In proportion as the new doctrine gained ground, a kind of hierarchy was instituted among its ministers, consisting of bishops, priests, acolytes, and sacristans, or porters. The object of the administration itself, included doctrine, discipline, and morals. To confer sacred orders, was the first act of the jurisdiction of the church. To set persons free, or to bind them, and to appoint a spiritual and voluntary expiation for offences, was the second. To excommunicate the rebellious sinner, or the heretic, was the third ; and the fourth, which is common to every association, was to institute rules of discipline. These rules, at first kept secret, and which were chiefly on the administration of the sacraments, were made public : assemblies or councils were holden. The bishops were the representatives of the apostles ; the rest of the clergy were subordinate to them. Nothing was decided without the concurrence of the faithful : so that this was a true democracy. Civil matters were referred to the arbitration of the bishops. The christians were blamed for having law-suits ; and still more for exposing themselves to be brought before the magistrates. It is probable that property was in common, and that the bishop disposed of it at pleasure.

Hitherto every thing was conducted without the interference of the secular power. But under Aurelian, the christians applied to the emperor for justice against Paul of Samosata. Constantine banished Arius, and condemned his writings to the flames ; Theodosius persecuted Nestorius ; and these innovations fixed the period of the second state of ecclesiastical jurisdiction : when it had now deviated from its primitive simplicity, and was become a mixture of spiritual power and coercive authority. The faithful, already extremely numerous, in the second century, were distributed in different churches subject to the same administration. Among these churches, there were some more or less considerable ; secular authority interfered in the election of bishops, and the confusion between these two powers increased. There were some poor and some rich

among them, and this was the first origin of the ambition of the clergy. There were indigent believers among them all; and the bishops became the dispensers of the alms: and this is the most ancient source of the corruption of the church.

What a rapid progress hath ecclesiastical authority made since the end of the third century! Proceedings are carried on before the bishops; and they become the arbiters in civil matters. The judicial sentence of the bishop admits of no appeal; and the execution of it is referred to the magistrates. The trial of a priest cannot be carried out of the province. A distinction arises between civil and ecclesiastical crimes, and this gives birth to the privilege of the clergy. The appeal to the sovereign is allowed, if it should happen that the sentence of the bishop should be invalidated at the tribunal of the magistrates. Long before these concessions, the bishops had obtained the inspection over the police and the morals; they took cognizance of prostitutions, foundlings, guardianships, lunatics, and minors; they visited the prisons; they solicited the enlargement of the prisoners; they denounced the negligent judges to the sovereign; they interfered with the disposal of the public money, with the construction and repairing of the great roads, and other edifices. Thus it is, that, under pretence of assisting each other, the two authorities were blended, and paved the way for the dissensions which were one day to arise between them. Such was in the first centuries, in the prosperous days of the church, the third state of its government, *half civil, half ecclesiastical*, to which, at present, we scarcely know what name to give. Was it from the weakness of the emperors, from their fear, from intrigue, or from sanctity of manners, that the chiefs of christianity conciliated to themselves so many important prerogatives? At that time religious terror had peopled the deserts with anchorets, more than seventy-six thousand of whom were reckoned: this was a nursery of deacons, priests, and bishops.

Constantine transferred the seat of empire to Byzantium. Rome was no more its capital. The barbarians, who had taken it more than once, and ravaged it, were converted. It was the fate of christianity, which had conquered the gods of the Capitol, to subdue the destroyers of

the throne of the Cæsars ; but in changing their religion, these chiefs of hordes did not change their manners. What strange kind of christians were Clovis and his successors ! exclaims the author of the history of the church. Notwithstanding the analogy between the ecclesiastical and the feudal government, it would be an illusion to make one the model of the other. Literature was no longer cultivated ; and the priests employed the little knowledge they had preserved, in forging titles, and in fabricating legends. The harmony between the two powers was disturbed. The origin and the riches of the bishops, attached the Romans, who neither had, nor could have, any thing but contempt and aversion for their new masters ; some of whom were pagans, others heretics, and all of them ferocious. No man ever doubted of the donation of Constantine ; and that of Pepin was confirmed by Charlemagne. The grandeur of the bishops of Rome increased under Lewis the debonair, and under Otho. They arrogated that sovereignty which their benefactors had reserved for themselves. Like other potentates they founded their claim upon prescription. The church was already infested with pernicious maxims ; and the opinion, that the bishop of Rome might depose kings, was universally adopted. Different causes afterwards concurred in establishing the supremacy of this see over the rest. The prince of the apostles had been the first bishop of Rome. Rome was the centre of union between all the other churches, the indigence of which she relieved. She had been the capital of the world ; and the christians were not so numerous anywhere else. The title of pope was a title common to all bishops, over whom the bishop of Rome did not obtain the superiority till the end of the eleventh century. At that time ecclesiastical government tended not only to *monarchy*, but had even advanced towards *universal monarchy*.

Towards the end of the eighth century, the famous decretals of Isidorus of Seville appeared. The pope announced himself to be infallible. He withdrew himself from his former submission to the councils. He held in his hand two swords ; one the emblem of his spiritual, the other of his temporal, power. Discipline was no more. The priests were the slaves of the pope, and kings were his vassals. He required tributes from them ; he abolished the ancient

judges, and appointed new ones. He created primates. The clergy were exempted from all civil jurisdiction; and Gratian the monk, by his decree, completed the mischief occasioned by the decretals. The clergy employed themselves in augmenting their income by every possible mode. The possession of their estates was declared immutable and sacred. Men were terrified with temporal as well as spiritual threats. Tithes were exacted. A traffic was made of relics; and pilgrimages were encouraged. This completed the destruction of morality, and the last stroke was thus given to the discipline of the church. A criminal life was expiated by a wandering one. Events were construed into the judgments of God; and decisions by water, by fire, or by the destiny of the saints, were adopted. The folly of judiciary astrology was added to superstitious opinions. Such was the state of the western church: *an absolute despotism*, with all its atrocious characters.

The eastern church experienced also its calamities. The Grecian empire had been dismembered by the Arabian mussulmen, by modern Scythians, by the Bulgarians, and by the Russians. These last were not amended by being washed with the waters of baptism. Mohammedism deprived christianity of part of its followers, and threw the rest into slavery. In the west, the barbarians, converted to christianity, had carried their manners along with them into the church. In the east, the Greeks had become depraved by their commercial intercourse with a race of men perfectly similar. Nevertheless, literature seemed to revive under the learned and vicious Photius. While the clergy of the east were striving against ignorance, our clergy in the west became hunters and warriors, and were possessed of lordships subject to military service. Bishops and monks marched under standards, massacred, and were massacred. The privileges of their domains had engaged them in public affairs. They wandered about with the ambulatory courts; they assisted at the national assemblies, which were become parliaments or councils; and this was the period of entire confusion between the two powers. Then it was that the bishops pretended openly to be the judges of sovereigns; that Vamba was compelled to do penance, invested with a monk's habit, and deposed; that the right of reigning was contested to Lewis the debonaire; that the popes inter-

ferred in the quarrels between nations, not as mediators, but as despots; that Adrian II forbade Charles the bald to invade the states of his nephew Clotaire; and that Gregory IX wrote to St. Lewis in these terms: "We have condemned Frederick II, who called himself emperor, and have deposed him; and we have elected in his stead Count Robert, your brother."

But if the clergy encroached upon the rights of the temporal power, the lay lords appointed and installed priests, without the participation of the bishops; regular benefices were given to seculars, and the convents were pillaged. Neither incontinence nor simony excited any shame. Bishoprics were sold; abbey's purchased; priests had either a wife or a concubine; the public temples were forsaken; and this disorder brought on the abuse and contempt of censures, which were poured forth against kings, and against their subjects; and torrents of blood were shed in all countries. The church and the empire were then in a state of *anarchy*. Pilgrimages were preludes to the crusades, or the expiation for crimes and assassinations. Ecclesiastics of all orders, believers of all ranks, inflamed themselves. Persons loaded with debts were dispensed from paying them; malefactors escaped the pursuit of the laws; corrupt monks broke through the restraints of their solitude; dissolute husbands forsook their wives. Courtezans exercised their infamous trade at the foot of the sepulchre of their god, and near to the tent of their sovereign. But it was impossible to carry on this expedition, and the succeeding ones, without funds. An impost was levied, and this gave rise to the claims of the pope upon all the estates of the church; to the institution of a multitude of military orders; to the alternative given to the vanquished, of slavery, or of embracing christianity, of death, or of baptism: and to console the reader for so many calamities, this circumstance occasioned the increase of navigation and commerce, which enriched Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Florence; the decline of the feudal government, by the disorder in the fortunes of the noblemen, and the habit of the sea, which, perhaps, paved the way from afar for the discovery of the New World. But I have not the courage to pursue any further the account of the disorders, and of the exorbitant increase, of papal authority. Under Innocent III there

was no more than one tribunal in the world, and that was at Rome; there was but one master, and he was at Rome, from whence he reigned over Europe by his legates. The ecclesiastical hierarchy extended itself one step further, by the creation of cardinals. Nothing was now wanting to the despot but janizaries, whom he acquired by creating a multitude of monastic orders. Rome, formerly the mistress of the world by arms, became so by opinion. But why did the popes, who were all-powerful over the minds of men, forget to maintain the terrors of their spiritual thunder, by directing it only against ambitious or unjust sovereigns? Who knows whether this kind of tribunal, so much wished for, to which crowned heads might be summoned, would not have existed to this day in Rome; and whether the threats of one common father, supported by general superstition, might not have put an end to every military contest?

The papal militia, composed of monks, who were laborious and austere in their origin, became corrupted. The bishops, tired out with the enterprises of the legates, of the secular magistrates, and of the monks, over their jurisdiction, encroached, on their parts, upon the secular jurisdiction, with a degree of boldness of which it is difficult to form an idea. If the clergy could have determined to erect gibbets, perhaps we should at present be under a government entirely sacerdotal. It is the maxim, that "the church abhors the effusion of blood," which has preserved us from it. There were schools in France and in Italy; and those at Paris were famous towards the eleventh century. The number of colleges was increased; and, nevertheless, this state of the church, which we have described without malice or exaggeration, was continued in all christian countries, from the ninth to the fourteenth century, an interval of four or five hundred years. The emperors have lost Italy, and the popes have acquired a great temporal power. No one hath yet raised himself against their spiritual power. The interests of this sovereign are embraced by all the Italians. The dignity of episcopacy is eclipsed by that of cardinal, and the secular clergy were always ruled by the regular clergy. Venice alone hath known and defended its rights. The irruption of the Moors in Spain hath thrown christianity there into an abject state, from which it hath scarce emerged for these two last centuries; and

even down to our days, the inquisition displays it under the most hideous aspect :—the inquisition, a terrible tribunal, a tribunal insulting to the spirit of Jesus Christ ; a tribunal, which ought to be detested by sovereigns, by bishops, by magistrates, and by subjects : by sovereigns, whom it ventures to threaten, and whom it hath sometimes cruelly persecuted ; by bishops, whose jurisdiction it annihilates ; by the magistrates, whose legitimate authority it usurps ; by the subjects, whom it keeps in continual terror, whom it reduces to silence, and condemns to stupidity, from the danger that attends their requiring instruction, their reading, their writing, and their speaking ; a tribunal which hath only owed its institution, and which only owes its continuance in those regions where it is still maintained, to a sacrilegious policy, jealous of perpetuating prejudices and prerogatives, which could not have been discussed, without being dispelled.

Before the schism of Henry VIII, England was subject to the pope, even in temporal concerns. London shook off the yoke of Rome ; but this reformation was less the effect of reason than of passion. Germany hath been a continual scene of violence on both sides ; and since the time of Luther, the catholics and schismatics have shewn themselves equally enthusiasts in that country, the former for papal tyranny, the latter for independence. Christianity was established in Poland, with all the claims of papal authority. In France the temporal power was considered as subordinate to the spiritual power. According to the sentiment of the favourers of the Tramontane opinions, this kingdom, as well as all the kingdoms of the earth, was subject to the church of Rome ; its princes might be excommunicated, and its subjects freed from the oath of allegiance. But the papal colossus was shaken ; and even since the fourteenth century it approached the instant of its downfall. Then literature was revived ; the ancient languages were cultivated ; the first Hebrew grammar was printed ; and the royal college was founded. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century, the art of printing was invented. A multitude of writings of all kinds were drawn out of the dust of monastic libraries, to be diffused among the people. The vulgar tongue was improved, and translations were made. The sovereign, and individuals, collected great lib-

aries. The decrees of the councils, the fathers, and the holy scriptures, were read. The canon law was attended to, and the history of the church was investigated. The spirit of criticism arose, and the apocryphal books were detected; while inspired writings were restored to their original purity. The eyes of the sovereigns and of the clergy were opened and they were enlightened by religious disputes. The origin of immunities, exemptions, and privileges, was traced; and the futility of them was demonstrated. Ancient times were searched into, and their discipline compared to modern customs. The hierarchy of the church resumed its influence, and the two powers withdrew into their respective limits. The decisions of the church resumed their efficacy; and if papal tyranny hath not been extinguished in France, it is at least confined within very narrow bounds. In 1681, the clergy of that kingdom decided, that temporal power was independent of spiritual power, and that the pope was subject to the canons of the church. If the mission of the priest be of divine right; if it belonged to him to set men free, and to inclose them in bonds; can he not excommunicate the impenitent sinner, or the heretic, whether he be a sovereign or a private man? According to our principles, this is a power that cannot be denied to him: but prudent men perceived, in this violent proceeding, such mischievous consequences, that they have declared it was scarce ever to be referred to. Doth excommunication involve the deposition of the sovereign, and disengage the subjects from their oath of allegiance? It would be high-treason to suppose it. Hence we see, that the ecclesiastical government, at least, in France, hath passed on, from the "tyranny of anarchy, to a kind of moderate aristocracy."

But if I might be allowed to explain myself upon a matter so important, I should venture to say, that neither in England, nor in the countries of Germany, of the United provinces, and of the north, the true principles have been traced. Had they been better known, how much blood and how many troubles would they have spared, the blood of pagans, heretics, and christians, since the first origin of natural forms of worship to the present day; and how much would they spare in future, if the rulers of the earth were prudent and steady enough to conform to them?

It appears to me, that the state is not made for religion, but religion for the state: this is the first principle.

The general interest is the universal rule that ought to prevail in a state: this is the second principle.

The people, or the sovereign authority, depositary of theirs, have alone the right to judge of the conformity of any institution whatever with the general interest: this is the third principle.

These three principles appear to me incontestably evident; and the propositions that follow are no more than corollaries deduced from them.

It therefore belongs to this authority, and to this authority alone, to examine the tenets and the discipline of religion: the tenets, in order to ascertain, whether, being contrary to common-sense, they will not expose the public tranquillity to commotions, so much the more dangerous, as the ideas of future happiness will be complicated with zeal for the glory of God, and with submission to truths, which will be considered as revealed: the discipline, to observe whether it doth not clash with the prevailing manners, extinguish the spirit of patriotism, damp the ardour of courage, occasion an aversion for industry, for marriage, and for public affairs; whether it be not injurious to population, and to the social state; whether it doth not inspire fanaticism, and a spirit of intoleration; whether it doth not sow the seeds of division between the relations of the same family, between families of the same city, between the cities of the same kingdom, and between the several kingdoms of the earth; whether it doth not diminish the respect due to the sovereign and the magistrates; and whether it doth not inculcate maxims so austere as to occasion melancholy, or practices which lead on to extravagance.

This authority, and this authority alone, can therefore proscribe the established mode of worship, adopt a new one, or even abolish every form of worship, if it should find it convenient. The general form of government being always settled at the first minute of its adoption, how is it possible that religion should give the law by its antiquity?

The state hath the supremacy in every thing. The distinction between a temporal and a spiritual power is a

palpable absurdity; and there neither can, nor ought to be, any more than one sole, and single, jurisdiction, wherever it belongs, to public utility alone, to order, or to defend.

For every offence whatever there should be but one tribunal; for every guilty person but one prison; for every illegal action but one law. Every contrary claim is injurious to the equality of the citizens; every possession is an usurpation of the claimant, at the expence of the common interest.

There should be no other councils than the assembly of the ministers of the sovereign. When the administrators are assembled, the church is assembled. When the state has pronounced, the church has nothing more to say.

There should be no other canons, except the edicts of the princes, and the decrees of the courts of judicature.

What is a common offence, and a privileged offence, where there is but one law, and one public matter, between the citizens?

Immunities, and other exclusive privileges, are so many acts of injustice, exercised against the other ranks of society that are deprived of them.

A bishop, a priest, or a member of the clerical body, may quit his country, if he chooses it; but then he is nothing. It belongs to the state to watch over his conduct, to appoint and to remove him.

If we understand by a benefice, any thing more than the salary every citizen ought to reap from his labour, this is an abuse which requires a speedy reformation. The man who doth nothing hath no right to eat.

And wherefore should not the priest acquire, enrich himself, enjoy, sell, buy, and make his will, as another citizen?

Let him be chaste, docile, humble; and even indigent; let him not be fond of women, let him be of a meek disposition, and let him prefer bread and water to all the conveniences of life; but let him be forbidden to bind himself to these observances by vows. The vow of chastity is repugnant to nature and injurious to population; the vow of poverty is only that of a foolish or of an idle man; the vow

of obedience to any other than to the ruling power, and to the law, is that of a slave or of a rebel.

If there existed, therefore, in any district of a country, sixty thousand citizens bound by such vows, what could the sovereign do better, than to repair to the spot, with a sufficient number of satellites armed with whips, and to say to them, go forth, ye lazy wretches, go forth; go to the fields, to agriculture, to the manufactures, to the militia?

Charity is the common duty of all those whose property exceeds their absolute wants.

The relief of old men, and of indigent and old persons, is the duty of the state they have served.

Let there be no other apostles but the legislator and the magistrates.

Let there be no sacred writings, except those which they shall acknowledge as such.

Let there be no divine right but the good of the republic.

I could extend these consequences to many other objects; but I stop here, protesting, that if in what I have said there should be any thing contrary to the good order of a well-regulated society, and to the felicity of the citizens, I retract; although I can scarce persuade myself that the nations can become enlightened, and not be sensible one day of the truth of my principles. As for the rest, I forewarn my readers that I have spoken only of the external forms of religion. With respect to internal religion, man is only accountable for it to God. It is a secret between man and him, who hath taken him out of nothing and can plunge him into it again.

If we now take a review of what has been said, we shall find that all the governments of Europe are comprehended under some of the forms we have been describing, and are differently modelled according to the local situation, the degree of population, the extent of territory, the influence of opinions and occupations, and the external connections and vicissitudes of events that act upon the system of the body politic, as the impression of surrounding fluids does upon natural bodies.

We are not to imagine, as it is often asserted, that all governments nearly resemble each other, and that the only

difference between them consists in the character of those who govern. This maxim may, perhaps, be true in absolute governments, among such nations as have no principles of liberty. These take the turn the prince gives them; they are haughty, proud, and courageous, under a monarch who is active and fond of glory; indolent and stupid under a superstitious king; full of hopes and fears under a young prince; of weakness and corruption under an old despot: or rather alternately confident and weak, under the several ministers who are raised by intrigue. In such states, government assumes the character of the administration; but in free states it is just the reverse.

Whatever may be said of the nature and springs of the different systems of government to which men are subject, the art of legislation being that which ought to be the most perfect, is also the most proper to employ men of the first genius. The science of government does not contain abstracted truths, or rather it has not one single principle which does not extend to all the branches of administration.

The state is a very complicated machine, which cannot be wound up or set in motion without a thorough knowledge of all its component parts. If any one of the parts be too much straitened or relaxed, the whole must be in disorder. Every project that may be beneficial to a certain number of citizens, or in critical times, may become fatal to the whole nation, and prejudicial for a long continuance. If we destroy or change the nature of any great body, those convulsive motions, which are called strokes of state, will disturb the whole nation, which may, perhaps, feel the effects of them for ages to come. All innovations ought to be brought about insensibly; they should arise from necessity, be the result, as it were, of the public clamour, or at least agree with the general wishes. To abolish old customs, or to introduce new ones on a sudden, tends only to increase that which is bad, and to prevent the effect of that which is good. To act without consulting the will of the generality, without collecting, as it were, the majority of votes in the public opinion, is to alienate the hearts and minds of men, and to bring every thing into discredit, even what is honest and good.

It would be a desirable thing in Europe, that the sovereigns, convinced of the necessity of improving the science

of government, should imitate a custom established in China. In this empire, the ministers are distinguished into two classes, the *thinkers* and the *signers*. While the latter are employed in the arrangement and dispatch of public affairs, the first attend only to the forming of projects, or to the examination of such as are presented to them. According to the admirers of the Chinese government, this is the source of all those judicious regulations, which establish in those regions the most enlightened systems of legislation, together with the most prudent administration. All Asia is subject to a despotic government; but in Turkey and Persia, it is a despotism of opinion by means of religion; in China, it is the despotism of the laws by the influence of reason. Among the mohammedans, they believe in the divine authority of the prince; among the Chinese, they believe in natural authority, founded upon the law of reason. But in these empires it is conviction that influences the will.

In the happy state of policy and knowledge to which Europe hath attained, it is plain that this conviction of the mind, which produces a free, easy, and general, obedience, can proceed from nothing but a certain evidence of the utility of the laws. If the governments will not pay *thinkers*, who may, perhaps, become suspicious or corrupt as soon as they are mercenary, let them, at least, allow men of superior understandings to watch in some measure over the public good. Every writer of genius is born a magistrate of his country; and he ought to enlighten it as much as it is in his power. His abilities give him a right to do it. Whether he be an obscure or a distinguished citizen, whatever be his rank or birth, his mind, which is always noble, derives its claims from his talents. His tribunal is the whole nation; his judge is the public, not the despot who does not hear him, nor the minister who will not attend to him.

All these truths have, doubtless, their boundaries; but it is always more dangerous to suppress the freedom of thought, than to leave it to its bent or impetuosity. Reason and truth triumph over those daring and violent minds, which are roused only by restraint, and irritated only by persecution. Kings and ministers, love your people, love mankind, and ye will be happy. Ye will then have no reason to fear men of free sentiments or unsatisfied minds, nor

the revolt of bad men. The revolt of the heart is much more dangerous; for virtue, when soured, and roused into indignation, is guilty of the most atrocious acts. Cato and Brutus were both virtuous; they were reduced to the alternative of choosing between two great enormities, suicide, or the death of Cæsar.

Remember that the interests of government and those of the nation are the same. Whoever attempts to separate them, is unacquainted with their true nature; and will only injure them.

Authority divides this great interest, when the wills of individuals are substituted to the established order. The laws, and those alone, ought to have the sway. This universal rule is not a yoke for the citizens, but a power which protects them, and a watchfulness which insures their tranquillity. They think themselves free; and this opinion, which constitutes their happiness, determines their submission. If the arbitrary caprices of a turbulent and enterprising administrator should subvert this fortunate system, the people, who from habit, prejudice, or self-love, are generally inclined to consider the government under which they live as the best of all possible governments, are deprived of this illusion, to which nothing can be substituted.

Authority divides this great interest; when it obstinately perseveres in any error into which it hath fallen. Let it not be blinded by a foolish pride, and it will perceive that those changes, which bring it back to what is true and good, far from weakening its springs, will strengthen them. To be undeceived with respect to a dangerous mistake, is not to contradict one's self; it is not to display to the people the inconstancy of government; it is to demonstrate to them its wisdom and its uprightness. If their respect were to diminish, it would be for that power which would never know its mistakes, or would always justify them, and not for those who would avow and correct them.

Authority divides this great interest, when it sacrifices the tranquillity, ease, and blood, of the people, to the terrible and transient brilliancy of warlike exploits. It is in vain that that we endeavour to justify these destructive propensities by statues and by inscriptions. These monuments of arrogance and flattery will one day be destroyed by time or overthrown by hatred. The memory of that prince only

will be respected, who shall have preferred peace, which must have insured happiness to his subjects, to victories which would have been only for himself; who shall have considered the empire as his family; who shall have made no other use of his power, than for the advantage of those who had intrusted him with it. His name and his character will be universally cherished. Fathers will inform posterity of the happiness which they enjoyed. Their children will repeat it to their descendants; and this delightful remembrance will be preserved from one age to another, and will be perpetuated in each family, and to the remotest centuries.

Authority divides this great interest, when the person in whose hands the reins of government have been placed, by birth or election, suffers them to be guided at pleasure by blind chance; when he prefers a mean repose to the dignity and the importance of the functions with which he is intrusted. His inaction is criminal and infamous. The indulgence with which his faults might have been treated, will be justly denied to his indolence. This severity will be the more lawful, as his character will have determined him to choose for substitutes the first ambitious men who may offer, and these almost necessarily men of no capacity. If even he had the singular good fortune of making a good choice, he would still be unpardonable, because it is not allowable to impose our duties upon others. He will die without having lived. His name will be forgotten, or, if remembered, it will only be as the names of those saggard kings, the years of whose reign history bath with reason disdained to count.

Authority divides this great interest, when the posts which determine the public tranquillity are intrusted to vile or corrupt men of intrigue; when favour shall obtain the rewards due to services; when the powerful springs, which insure the grandeur and the duration of empires, are destroyed. All emulation is extinct. The enlightened and laborious citizens either conceal themselves, or retire. The wicked and the audacious shew themselves insolently, and prosper. Every thing is directed and determined by presumption, by interest, and by the most disordinate passions. Justice is disregarded, virtue is degraded, and propriety, which might in some measure be a substitute to it, is considered as an old prejudice or a ridiculous custom. Dis-

couragement within and opprobrium without, these are all that remain to a nation formerly powerful and respected.

There may sometimes be people dissatisfied under a good government; but where there are many that are unhappy, without any kind of public prosperity, then it is that the government is vicious in its nature.

Mankind are just as we would have them to be; it is the mode of government which gives them a good or an evil propensity.

A state ought to have one object only in view; and that is, public felicity. Every state has a particular manner of promoting this end; which may be considered as its spirit, its principle, to which every thing else is subordinate.

A nation can have no industry for the arts, nor courage for war, without a confidence in, and an attachment to, the government. But when the principle of fear hath broken every other spring of the soul, a nation then becomes of no consequence, the prince is exposed to a thousand enterprises from without, and a thousand dangers from within. Despised by his neighbours, and abhorred by his subjects, he must be in perpetual fear for the safety of his kingdom, as well as for that of his own life. It is a happiness for a nation that commerce, arts, and sciences, should flourish within it. It is even a happiness for those who govern, when they are not inclined to exert acts of tyranny. Upright minds are very easily led; but none have a greater aversion for violence and slavery. Let good monarchs be blessed with enlightened people, and let tyrants have none but brutes to reign over.

Military power is both the cause and the destruction of despotism; which in its infant state may be compared to a lion that conceals his talons in order to let them grow. In its full vigour, it may be considered as a madman who tears his body to pieces with his arms. In its advanced age, it is like Saturn, who, after having devoured his children, is shamefully mutilated by his own race.

Government may be divided into legislation and policy. Legislation relates to the internal management of the state, and policy to the external direction of it.

Policy.

SAVAGE nations, which are addicted to hunting, have rather a policy than a legislation. Governed among themselves by manners and ex-

ample, the only conventions or laws they have are between one nation and another. Treaties of peace or alliance constitute their only code of legislation.

Such were nearly the societies of ancient times. Separated by deserts, without any communication of trade or voyages, they had only a present and immediate interest to settle. All their negotiations consisted in putting an end to a war by fixing the boundaries of a state. As it was necessary to persuade a nation, and not bribe a court by the mistresses or favourites of a prince, eloquent men were employed for this purpose; and the names of orator and ambassador were synonymous.

In the middle ages, when every thing, even justice itself, was decided by force; when the Gothic government divided by separate interests all those petty states which owed their existence to its constitution; negotiations had but little influence over a wild and reclusive people, who knew no right but that of war, no treaties but for truces or ransoms.

During this long period of ignorance and barbarism, policy was entirely confined to the court of Rome. It had arisen from the artifices which had founded the papal government. As the pontiffs, by the laws of their religion and the system of the hierarchy, influenced a very numerous clergy, whose proselytes extended perpetually in all the christian states, the correspondence kept up with the bishops, established early at Rome a centre of communication for all the different churches or nations. All rights were subordinate to a religion which exercised an absolute authority over the mind of every individual; it had a share in almost every transaction, either as the motive or the means; and the popes, by the Italian agents they had placed in all the prelaties of the christian state, were constantly informed of every commotion, and availed themselves of every event. They had the highest interest in this; that of attaining universal monarchy. The barbarism of the times in which this project was conceived, does not lessen its greatness and sublimity. How daring was the attempt, to subdue, without troops, nations that were always in arms! What art to make even the weakness of the clergy respectable and sacred! What skill to agitate, to shake, thrones one after the other, in order to keep them all in subjection! So deep, so extensive, a design could only be carried into execution by being concealed; and

therefore was inconsistent with a hereditary monarchy ; in which the passions of kings, and the intrigues of ministers, are the cause of so much instability in affairs. This project, and the general rule of conduct it requires, could not be formed but in an elective government, in which the chief is always chosen from a body animated with the same spirit, and guided by the same maxims ; in which an aristocratic court rather governs the prince, than suffers itself to be governed by him.

While Italian policy was engaged in examining all the states of Europe, and availing itself of every opportunity to aggrandize and confirm the power of the church, each sovereign saw with indifference the revolutions that were taking place without. Most of them were too much engaged in establishing their authority in their own dominions, in disputing the branches of power with the several bodies which were in possession of them, or which were striving against the natural bent that monarchy has to despotism : they were not sufficiently masters of their own inheritance, to interfere in the disputes of their neighbours.

The fifteenth century changed the order of things. When the princes had collected their forces, they were inclined to bring them to action, and try their respective strength. Till that time, the nations had only carried on war with each other upon their several frontiers. The season of the campaign was lost in assembling troops, which every baron always raised very slowly. There were then only skirmishes between small parties, not any regular battles between different armies. When a prince, either by alliances or inheritance, had acquired possessions in different states, the interests were confounded, and contentions arose among the people. It was necessary to send regular troops in the pay of the monarch, to defend at a distance territories that did not belong to the state. The crown of England no longer held provinces in the midst of France ; but that of Spain acquired some rights in Germany, and that of France laid some claims in Italy. From that time all Europe was in a perpetual alternate state of war and negotiation.

The ambition, talents, and rivalry, of Charles V and Francis I gave rise to the present system of modern politics. Before these two kings, France and Spain had disputed the kingdom of Naples, in the name of the houses of Arragon and Anjou. Their dissensions had excited a ferment

throughout all Italy, and the republic of Venice was the chief cause of that intestine commotion that was excited against two foreign powers. The Germans took a part in these disturbances, either as auxiliaries, or as being interested in them. The emperor and the pope were concerned in them with almost all Christendom. But Francis I and Charles V engaged in their fate, the views, the anxiety, the destiny, of all Europe. All the powers seemed to be divided between two rival houses, in order to weaken alternately the most powerful. Fortune favoured the talents, the force, and the artifice, of Charles V. More ambitious and less voluptuous than Francis I, his character turned the scale, and Europe for a time inclined to his side, but did not continue always to favour the same interest.

Philip II, who had all the spirit of intrigue, but not the military virtues of his father, inherited his projects and ambitious views, and found the times favourable to his aggrandizement. He exhausted his kingdom of men and ships, and even of money, though he was in possession of the mines of the New World; and left behind him a more extensive monarchy, but Spain itself in a much weaker state than it had been under his father.

His son imagined he should again make all Europe dependent, by an alliance with that branch of his house which reigned in Germany. Philip II had through negligence relinquished this political idea: Philip III resumed it. But in other respects he followed the erroneous, narrow, superstitious, and pedantic, principles of his predecessor. Within the state, there was much formality, but no order and no economy. The church was perpetually encroaching upon the state. The inquisition, that horrid monster, which conceals its head in the heavens and its feet in the infernal regions, struck at the root of population, which at the same time suffered considerably from war and the colonies. In the external operations of the state, there were still the same ambitious views, and less skilful measures. Rash and precipitate in his enterprises, slow and obstinate in the execution of them, Philip III had all those defects which are prejudicial to each other, and occasion every project to miscarry. He destroyed the small degree of life and vigour the monarchy yet retained. Richelieu availed himself of the weakness of Spain, and the foibles of the king

whom he ruled over, to fill that period with his intrigues, and cause his name to descend to posterity. Germany and Spain were in some manner connected to each other by the house of Austria: to this league, he opposed that of France with Sweden, to counteract the effect of the former. This system would naturally have taken place in his times, if it had not been the work of his genius. Gustavus Adolphus by his conquests enslaved all the north. All Europe concurred in lowering the pride of the house of Austria; and the peace of the Pyrenees turned the scale against Spain in favour of France.

Charles V had been accused of aiming at universal monarchy; and Lewis XIV was taxed with the same ambition. But neither of them ever conceived so high and so rash a project. They were both of them passionately desirous of extending their empire, by the aggrandizement of their families. This ambition is equally natural to princes of common abilities, who are born without any talents, as it is to monarchs of superior understanding, who have no virtues or moral qualifications. But neither Charles V nor Lewis XIV had that kind of spirit of resolution, that impulse of the soul, to brave every thing, which constitutes heroic conquerors: they bore no resemblance in any particular to Alexander. Nevertheless useful alarms were taken and spread abroad. Such alarms cannot be too soon conceived, nor too soon diffused, when there arise any powers that are formidable to their neighbours. It is chiefly among nations, and with respect to kings, that fear produces safety.

When Lewis XIV began to reflect on his own situation, perhaps he might be surprised at seeing himself more powerful than he thought he was. His greatness was partly owing to the little harmony that subsisted between the forces and the designs of his enemies. Europe had, indeed, felt the necessity of a general union, but had not discovered the means of forming it. In treating with this monarch, proud of success, and vain from the applause he had received, it was thought a considerable advantage if every thing was not given up. In a word, the insults of France, which increased with her victories; the natural turn of her intrigues to spread dissension everywhere, in order to reign alone; her contempt for the faith of treaties; the haughty and authoritative tone she usurped, turned the

general envy she had excited into detestation, and raised universal alarms. Even those princes, who had seen without umbrage, or favoured the increase of her power, felt the necessity of repairing this error in politics, and of combining and raising among themselves a body of forces superior to those of France, in order to prevent her tyrannising over the nations.

Leagues were, therefore, formed, which were for a long time ineffectual. One man alone was found capable to animate and conduct them. Warmed with that public spirit, which only great and virtuous souls can possess, it was a prince, though born in a republic, who, for the general cause of Europe was inflamed with that love of liberty, so natural to upright minds. He turned his ambition towards the greatest object, and most worthy of the time in which he lived. His own interest never warped him from that of the public. With a courage peculiar to himself he knew how to defy those very misfortunes which he foresaw; depending less for success upon his military abilities, than, waiting for a favourable turn of affairs, from his patience and political activity. Such was the situation of affairs when the succession to the throne of Spain set all Europe in flames.

Since the empire of the Persians and that of the Romans, ambition had never been tempted by so rich a spoil. The prince, who might have united this crown to his own, would naturally have arisen to that universal monarchy, the idea of which raised a general alarm. It was therefore necessary to prevent this empire from becoming the possession of a power already formidable, and to keep the balance equal between the houses of Austria and Bourbon, which had the only hereditary right to the throne.

Men well versed in the knowledge of the manners and affairs of Spain, have asserted, if we may believe Bolingbroke, that had it not been for the hostilities, which were then excited by England and Holland, we should have seen Philip V as good a Spaniard as his predecessors; and that the French ministry would then have had no influence over the Spanish administration; but that the war raised against the Spaniards for the sake of giving them a ruler, obliged them to have recourse to the fleets and armies of a state that was alone capable of assisting them in fixing upon

such a king as they wanted. This just idea, the result of deep reflection, has been confirmed by the experience of half a century. The turn of the Spaniards has never been able to coincide with the taste of the French. Spain, from the character of her inhabitants, seems rather to belong to Africa than to Europe.

The train of events, however, answered to the general wishes. The armies and the councils of the quadruple alliance gained an equal superiority over the common enemy. Instead of those languid and unfortunate campaigns which had tried the patience of the prince of Orange, but not discouraged him, all the operations of the confederates were successful. France, in her turn, humbled and defeated on every side, was upon the brink of ruin, when she was restored by the death of the emperor.

It was then perceived, that if the archduke Charles, crowned with the imperial diadem, and succeeding to all the dominions of the house of Austria, should join Spain and the West-Indies to this vast inheritance, he would be in possession of that same exorbitant power which the house of Bourbon had been deprived of by the war. But the enemies of France still persisted in their design of dethroning Philip V, without thinking of the person that was to succeed him; while true politicians, notwithstanding their triumphs, grew tired of a war, the very success of which always became an evil, when it could no longer do any good.

This difference of opinions raised dissensions among the allies, which prevented them from reaping all those advantages from the peace of Utrecht they might reasonably have expected from their success. The best means that could be devised to protect the provinces of the allies, were to lay open the frontiers of France. Lewis XIV had employed forty years in fortifying them, and his neighbours had suffered him quietly to raise these bulwarks which kept them in continual awe. It was necessary to demolish them: for every strong power that puts itself in a posture of defence, intends to form an attack. Philip remained upon the throne of Spain; and the fortifications were left standing in Flanders, and on the borders of the Rhine.

Since this period, no opportunity hath offered to rectify the mistake committed at the peace of Utrecht. France

bath always maintained its superiority on the continent ; but chance hath often diminished its influence. The scales of the political balance will never be perfectly even, nor accurate enough to determine the degrees of power with exact precision. Perhaps, even this balance of power may be nothing more than a chimera. It can be only fixed by treaties, and these have no validity, when they are only made between absolute monarchs, and not between nations. These acts must be permanent when made by the people themselves, because the object of them is their peace and safety, which are their greatest advantages : but a despot always sacrifices his subjects to his anxiety, and his engagements to his ambition.

But it is not war alone that determines the superiority of nations, as it hath been hitherto imagined ; since during the last half century commerce hath had a much greater influence in it. While the powers of the continent divided Europe into unequal portions, which policy, by means of leagues, treaties, and alliances, always preserved in a certain equilibrium, a maritime people formed as it were a new system, and by their industry made the land subject to the sea ; as nature herself has done by her laws. They formed, or brought to perfection, that extensive commerce, which is founded on an excellent system of agriculture, flourishing manufactures, and the richest possessions of the four quarters of the world. This is the kind of universal monarchy that Europe ought to wrest from England, in restoring to each maritime state that freedom and that power it hath a right to have upon the element that surrounds it. This is a system of public good founded upon natural equity, and in this case justice is the voice of general interest. The people cannot be too much warned to resume all their powers, and to employ the resources offered them by the climate and the soil they inhabit, to acquire that national and distinct independence in which they were born.

If all Europe were sufficiently enlightened, and each nation were acquainted with its rights and its real advantages, neither the continent nor the ocean would mutually give laws to each other ; but a reciprocal influence would be established between the continental and maritime people, a balance of industry and power, which would induce a mutual intercourse for the general benefit. Each nation

would sow and reap upon its proper element. The several states would enjoy the same liberty of exportation and importation that should subsist between the provinces of the same empire.

There is a great error that prevails in modern politics, which is, that every state should endeavour to weaken its enemies as much as possible. But no nation can seek the ruin of another state, without paving the way for, and hastening, its own slavery. There are certain moments in which fortune at once throws into the way of people a great increase of power; but such sudden elevations are not lasting. It is sometimes better to support rivals, than to oppress them. Sparta refused to enslave Athens; and Rome repented of having destroyed Carthage.

These noble and generous sentiments would prevent policy from the necessity of committing many crimes and asserting many falsehoods; policy, which for these two or three centuries past hath had more important and more various objects to attend to. The influence of policy was formerly much limited, it seldom extended beyond the frontiers of the several nations. Its sphere hath been singularly enlarged in proportion as the nations most distant from each other have formed connections among themselves. It hath particularly received an immense increase since the time, when by discoveries, either fortunate or unfortunate, all the parts of the universe have been rendered subordinate to those which we inhabit.

As the operations of policy were multiplied in proportion to the extent which it acquired, every power thought it necessary for their interests to fix agents in foreign courts, who had formerly been employed there but for a very short time. The habit of treating incessantly gave birth to maxims unknown before that period. Delays and artifices were substituted to the frankness and celerity of transient negotiations. The powers sounded and studied each other, and reciprocal attempts were made to tire out or to surprize all parties. Secrets which had been found impenetrable were purchased with gold, and bribery completed what intrigue had begun.

It appeared necessary to furnish a continual supply of matter to quiet that spirit of anxiety with which the minds of all the ambassadors had been impressed. Policy, like

that insidious insect that weaves its web in darkness, hath stretched forth its net in the midst of Europe, and fastened it, as it were, to every court. One single thread cannot be touched without drawing all the rest. The most petty sovereign hath some secret interest in the treaties between the greater powers. Two petty princes of Germany cannot exchange a fief, or a domain, without being thwarted or seconded by the courts of Vienna, Versailles, or London. Negotiations must be carried on in all the cabinets for years together for every the most trifling change in the disposition of the land. The blood of the people is the only thing that is not bargained for. War is determined upon in a day or two; the settling of peace is protracted during several years. The slowness in negotiations, which proceeds from the nature of affairs, is also increased by the the character of the negociators.

These are generally ignorant persons, who are treating with some men of knowledge and abilities. The chancellor Oxenstiern ordered his son to prepare himself to go to Westphalia, where the troubles of the empire were to be pacified. "But," said the young man, "I have not attended to any previous studies necessary for this important commission." "I will prepare you for it," replied the father. A fortnight after, Oxenstiern, who had not spoken upon the subject to his son, said to him, "My son, you must set out to-morrow." "But, sir, you had promised to instruct me, and you have not done it." "Go, nevertheless," replied the experienced minister, shrugging up his shoulders, "and you will see by what kind of men the world is governed." There are, perhaps, two or three wise and judicious councils in Europe. The rest are in the possession of intriguing men, raised to the management of affairs by the passions and shameful pleasures of a prince and his mistresses. A man is advanced to a share in the administration, without any knowledge of the subject; he adopts the first system that is offered to his caprice, pursues it without understanding it, and, with a degree of obstinacy proportionate to his ignorance, he changes the whole plan of his predecessors, in order to introduce his own system of administration, which he will never be able to support. Richlieu's first declaration, when he became minister, was, "the council hath altered its plan." This saying, which

was once found to be a good one, in the mouth of one single man, has, perhaps, been repeated, or thought of, by every one of Richelieu's successors. All men engaged in public affairs have the vanity not only to proportion the parade of their expence, of their manner, and of their air, to the importance of their office, but even to raise the opinion they have of their own understanding, in proportion to the influence of their authority.

When a nation is great and powerful, what should its governors be. The court and the people will answer this question, but in a very different manner. The ministers see nothing in their office but the extent of their rights; the people the extent only of their duties. The ideas of the latter are just; for the duties and rights arising from each mode of government ought to be regulated by the wants and desires of each nation. But this principle of the law of nature is not applicable to the social state. As societies, whatever be their origin, are almost all of them subject to the authority of one single man, political measures are dependent on the character of the prince.

If the king be a weak and irresolute man, his government will change as his ministers, and his politics will vary with his government. He will alternately have ministers that are ignorant or enlightened, steady or fickle, deceitful or sincere, harsh or humane, inclined to war or peace; such, in a word, as the variety of intrigues will produce them. Such a state will have no regular system of politics; and all other governments will not be able to maintain any permanent designs and measures with it. The system of politics must then vary with the day, or the moment; that is, with the humour of the prince. Under a weak and unsteady reign, none but temporary interests ought to prevail; and connections subordinate to the instability of the ministry.

The reciprocal jealousy prevailing between the depositaries of the royal authority is another cause of this instability. One man, against the testimony of his conscience and of his knowledge, counteracts, from a motive of mean jealousy, a useful measure, the honour of which would belong to his rival. The next day the same infamous part is adopted by the latter. The sovereign alternately grants what he had refused, or refuses what he had granted. The

negociator will easily perceive which of his ministers he has least consulted, but it is impossible for him to foresee what his last resolution will be. In this embarrassment to whom shall we have recourse? To bribery and to the women, if he be sent into a country governed by a man. To bribery and to the men, if he be sent into a country governed by a woman. He must lay aside the character of the ambassador or of the envoy, in order to assume that of the corrupter, the only one by which he can succeed. It is gold which he must substitute to the most profound policy. But if by some chance, of which perhaps there is scarce any example, gold should fail of its effect, the only resource he has remaining is to solicit to be recalled.

But the fate of nations and political interests are very different in republican governments. As the authority there resides in the collective body of the people, there are certain principles and some public interests attended to in every negotiation. In this case, the permanency of a system is not to be confined to the duration of the ministry, or to the life of one single man. The general spirit that exists and perpetuates itself in the nation is the only rule of every negotiation. Not but that a powerful citizen, or an eloquent demagogue, may sometimes lead a popular government into a political mistake; but this is easily recovered. Faults, in these instances, may be considered equally with successes as lessons of instruction. Great events, and not men, produce remarkable periods in the history of republics. It is in vain to attempt to surprise a free people by artifice or intrigues, into a treaty of peace or alliance. Their maxims will always make them return to their lasting interests, and all engagements will give way to the supreme law. In these governments, it is the safety of the people that does every thing, while in others it is the will of the ruler.

This contrast of political principles has rendered every popular government suspicious or odious to all absolute monarchs. They have dreaded the influence of a republican spirit upon their own subjects, the weight of whose chains they are every day increasing. A kind of secret conspiracy may therefore be perceived between all monarchies, to destroy, or insensibly to sap, the foundations of all free states. But liberty will arise from the midst of oppression. It already exists in every breast; public writ.

ings will contribute to instil it into the minds of all enlightened men, and tyranny into the hearts of the people. All men will, at length, be sensible, and this period is at no great distance, that liberty is the first gift of Heaven, as it is the first source of virtue. The instruments of despotism will become its destroyers; and the enemies of humanity, those who seem armed at present merely to oppose it, will exert themselves in its defence.

War. In this place I was intending to speak of war, or that rage which, being kindled by injustice, ambition, and revenge, assembles, under two adverse commanders, a multitude of armed men, impels them against each other, drenches the earth with their blood, strews it with dead bodies, and prepares nourishment for the animals that come after them, but who are less ferocious than they.

But I have suddenly postponed my intention, by asking of myself what peace is, and whether it exists anywhere? Upon the spot where I now am, in the centre of my own city, a multitude of interests opposite to mine confine me, and I repel them. If I pass the limits of that space which I call my own country, I am considered with an anxious eye; I am accosted, and asked, who I am, from whence I came, and where I am going? At length I obtain a bed, and am preparing to take some rest, when a sudden clamour compels me to depart. If I remain, I am proscribed; and the next day the house which had given me refuge shall be set on fire, and those who have treated me as a fellow-citizen shall be murdered by assassins who speak my own language. Should curiosity, or a thirst of knowledge, induce me to visit another country; if I take some pains to examine it, I am immediately suspected, and a spy is commissioned to watch me. Should I have the misfortune to worship God in my own way, which happens not to be that of the country I am visiting, I am surrounded by priests and executioners. I then make my escape, exclaiming, with grief:—peace, then, that blessing so earnestly wished for, exists not in any place.

The good man, however, hath his dreams; and I will acknowledge, that being witness to the progress of knowledge, which hath shaken so many prejudices, and intro-

duced so much softness in our manners, I have thought that it was impossible the infernal art of war should be perpetuated, but that it would sink into oblivion. The people who have brought it to perfection will become accursed; and the moment when these formidable instruments of death shall be generally demolished cannot be far distant. The universe will at length execrate those odious conquerors, who have rather chosen to be the terror of their neighbours than the fathers of their subjects, and to invade provinces rather than to gain the affections of men; who have chosen that the cries of grief should be the only hymn accompanying their victories; who have raised up melancholy monuments, destined to immortalize their rage and their vanity, in the countries which they had spoiled, in the cities they had reduced to ashes, and over the carcases which their swords had heaped on each other; conquerors, who have had no other wish than that the history of their reign should contain only the remembrance of the calamities they had occasioned. Mankind will no longer be deceived respecting the objects of their admiration. They will no longer, with abject infatuation, prostrate themselves before those who trampled them under their feet. Calamities will be considered in their proper light; and the nocturnal labours and talents of great artists will no longer be prostituted to the commemoration of brilliant crimes. Princes themselves will partake of the wisdom of their age. The voice of philosophy will revive in their minds sentiments which have long lain dormant, and will inspire them with horror, and a contempt for sanguinary glory. They will be confirmed in these ideas by the ministers of religion; who, availing themselves of the sacred privilege of their functions, will drag them before the tribunal of the Great Judge, where they will be obliged to answer for the thousands of unfortunate persons sacrificed to their hatred or caprice. If it were resolved in the decrees of Heaven, that sovereigns should persevere in their frenzy, those numberless hordes of assassins, who are kept in pay would throw away their arms. Filled with a just horror for their detestable employment, and with profound indignation against the cruel abuse which was made of their strength and of their courage, they would leave their extravagant despots to settle their quarrels themselves.

But this illusion did not last long. I was soon persuaded that the disputes between kings would never end, any more than their passions, and that they could only be decided by the sword. I thought that it would be impossible ever to disgust of the horrors of war a people, who, notwithstanding all sorts of cruelties and devastations were committed around them without scruple and without remorse, upon the scene of discord, still found, while sitting quietly by their fire-side, that there were not sieges, battles, or catastrophes, enough to satisfy their curiosity and amuse their vacant hours. I thought, that there was nothing either reasonable or humane to be expected from a set of subaltern butchers, who, far from giving themselves up to despair, from tearing their hair, from detesting themselves, and from shedding rivers of tears at the sight of a vast plain filled with scattered members, were, on the contrary, able to go over it with an air of triumph, bathing their feet in the blood of their friends and of their enemies, walking over their carcases, and mixing songs of mirth with the plaintive accents of expiring men. It seemed to me, as if I heard the speech of one of those tygers, who, blending flattery with ferociousness, said to a monarch, seized with a consternation at the sight of a field of battle covered with torn limbs and dead bodies, scarcely cold,—“ Sir, it is not us, but those who are too happy :” and thus prevented the tears from falling from the eyes of a young prince ; tears, which he ought rather to have prompted him to shed, by saying to him,—“ behold, and consider the effects of thy ambition, of thy folly, of thy rage, and of ours ; and feel the drops of blood trickling down thy cheeks, which fall from the laurels with which we have crowned thee.” These distressing reflections plunged me into melancholy ; so that it was sometime before I could resume the thread of my ideas, and go on with my subject.

War has existed at all times and in all countries ; but the art of war is only to be found in certain ages of the world, and among certain people. The Greeks instituted it, and conquered all the powers of Asia. The Romans improved it, and subdued the world. These two nations, worthy to command all others, as their genius and virtue were the causes of their prosperity, owed this superiority

to their infantry, in which every single man exerts his whole strength. The Grecian phalanx and the Roman legions were everywhere victorious.

When indolence had introduced a superior number of cavalry into the armies of the ancients, Rome lost some of its glory and success. Notwithstanding the exact discipline of its troops, it could no longer resist those barbarous nations that fought on foot.

These men, however, little better than savages, who, with arms only, and those powers nature had taught them the use of, had subdued the most extensive and the most civilized empire of the universe, soon changed their infantry into cavalry. This was properly called the line of battle, or the army. All the nobility, who were the sole possessors of lands and of privileges, those usual attendants of victory, chose to ride on horseback; while the enslaved multitude were left on foot, almost without arms, and were scarce holden in any degree of estimation.

In times when the gentleman was distinguished by his horse; when the man himself was of little consequence, and every idea of importance was attached to the knight; when wars consisted in small incursions, and campaigns lasted but a day; when success depended upon the quickness of marches; then the fate of armies was determined by cavalry. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, there were scarce any other troops in Europe. The dexterity and strength of men was no longer shewn in wrestling, at the cestus, in the exercise of arms, and of all the muscles of the body; but in tournaments, in managing a horse, and in throwing the lance at full speed. This species of war, better calculated for wandering Tartars, than for fixed and sedentary societies, was one of the defects of the feudal government. A race of conquerors, whose rights were to be determined by their swords, whose merit and glory were in their arms, whose sole occupation was hunting, could scarce avoid riding on horseback, with all that parade and spirit of authority which must necessarily arise from a rude and uncultivated understanding. But what could troops of heavy-armed cavalry avail in the attack and defence of castles and towns, fortified by walls or by surrounding waters?

To this imperfection of the military art, must be ascribed the duration of war for several ages, without intermission, between France and England. War continued incessantly for want of a sufficient number of men. Whole months were required to collect, to arm, to bring into the field troops, that were only to continue there a few weeks. Kings could not assemble more than a certain number of vassals, and those at stated times. The lords had only a right to call under their banners some of their tenants, upon stipulated terms. The time that ought to have been employed in carrying on war was lost in forms and regulations, in the same manner as courts of justice consume those estates they are to determine. At length the French, tired with being constantly obliged to repulse the English, like the horse that implored the assistance of man against the stag, suffered the yoke and burthen to be imposed upon them, which they bear to this day. Kings raised and maintained at their own expence a constant body of troops. Charles VII, after having expelled the English by the assistance of mercenary troops, when he disbanded his army, kept nine thousand horse and sixteen thousand infantry.

This was the origin of the abasement of the nobility and the elevation of monarchy, of the political liberty of the nation without, and its civil slavery within. The people were delivered from feudal tyranny, only to fall, some time or other, under the despotism of kings. So much does human nature seem born for slavery ! It became necessary to raise a fund for the payment of an army ; and the taxes were arbitrary, and unlimited as the number of soldiers who were distributed in the different parts of the kingdom, under a pretence of guarding the frontiers against the enemy ; but in reality to restrain and oppress the subject. The officers, commanders, and governors, were tools of government always armed against the nation itself. They, as well as their soldiers, no longer considered themselves as citizens of the state, solely devoted to the defence of the property and rights of the people. They acknowledged no longer any person in the kingdom except the king, in whose name they were ready to massacre their fathers and brothers. In short, the body of troops raised by the nation was nothing more than a royal army.

The discovery of gunpowder, which required considerable expence and great preparation, forges, magazines, and arsenals, made arms more than ever dependent on kings, and determined the advantage that infantry hath over cavalry. The latter presented the flank of the man and horse to the former. A horseman dismounted was either lost or good for nothing; and a horse without a leader occasioned confusion and disorder among the ranks. The havoc which the artillery and fire-arms made in squadrons, was more difficult to repair than it was in battalions. In a word, men could be bought and disciplined at a less expence than horses; and this made it easy for kings to procure soldiers.

Thus the innovation of Charles VII, fatal to his subjects, at least in futurity, became from his example prejudicial to the liberty of all the people of Europe. Every nation was obliged to keep itself upon the defence against a nation always in arms. The right system of politics, if there were any politics at a time when arts, literature, and commerce, had not yet opened a communication among people, should have been, for the princes to have jointly attacked that particular power that had put itself into a state of continual war. But instead of compelling it to submit to peace, they took up arms themselves. This contagion spread itself the quicker, as it appeared the sole remedy against the danger of an invasion, the only guarantee of the security of the nations.

There was, however, a general want of the knowledge necessary to discipline a body of infantry, the importance of which began to be perceived. The manner of fighting which the Switzers had employed against the Burgundians, had rendered them as celebrated as formidable. With heavy swords and long halberds, they had always overcome the horses and men of the feudal army. As their ranks were impenetrable, and as they marched in close columns, they overthrew all that attacked and all that opposed them. Every power was then desirous of procuring some Swiss soldiers. But the Switzers, sensible of the need there was of their assistance, and setting the purchase of it at too high a rate, it became necessary to resolve not to employ them, and to form in all parts a national infantry, in order not to depend upon these auxiliary troops.

The Germans first adopted a discipline that required only strength of body and subordination. As their country abounded in men and horses, they almost rivalled the reputation of the Swiss infantry, without losing the advantage of their own cavalry.

The French, more lively, adopted, with greater difficulty, and more slowly, a kind of military system that laid a restraint upon all their motions, and seemed rather to require perseverance than impetuosity. But the taste for imitation and novelty prevailed among this light people over that vanity which is fond of its own customs.

The Spaniards, notwithstanding the pride they have been reproached with, improved the military art of the Switzers, by bringing to greater perfection the discipline of that warlike people. They formed an infantry which became alternately the terror and admiration of Europe.

In proportion as the infantry increased, the custom and service of the feudal militia ceased in all parts, and war became more general. The constitution of each nation had for ages past scarce allowed the different people to wage war and massacre one another beyond the barriers of their own states. War was carried on upon the frontiers only between the neighbouring powers. When France and Spain had carried their arms to the most remote extremities of Italy, it was no longer possible to call together the ban and the arriere ban of the nations, because it was not in fact the people who made war against each other, but the kings with their troops, for the honour of themselves or their families, without any regard to the good of their subjects. Not that the princes did not endeavour to interest the national pride of the people in their quarrels; but this was done merely to weaken, or totally to subdue that spirit of independence, which was still struggling among some sets of men, against that absolute authority which the princes had gradually assumed.

All Europe was in commotion. The Germans marched into Italy, the Italians into Germany, the French into both these countries. The Turks besieged Naples and Nice, and the Spaniards were at the same time dispersed in Africa, in Hungary, in Italy, in Germany, in France, and in the Low countries. All these people, injured and practised in arms, acquired great skill in the art of fighting and destroying each other with infallible regularity and precision.

It was religion that caused the Germans to contend with the Germans, the French with the French, but which more particularly excited Flanders against Spain. It was on the fens of Holland that all the rage of a bigoted and despotic king fell, of a superstitious and sanguinary prince, of the two Philips, and of the duke of Alva. It was in the Low countries that a republic arose from the persecution of tyranny and the flames of the inquisition. When freedom had broken her chains, and found an asylum in the ocean, she raised her bulwarks upon the continent. The Dutch first invented the art of fortifying places; so much do genius and invention belong to free minds. Their example was generally followed. Extensive states had only occasion to fortify their frontiers. Germany and Italy, divided among a number of princes, were crowded with strong citadels from one end to the other. When we travel through these countries, we meet every evening with gates shut and draw-bridges at the entrance of the towns.

While Nassau, who had taken up arms to secure the independence of his country, was renewing the science of fortification, the passion for glory stimulated Gustavus Adolphus to investigate, according to the maxims of the ancients, the principles of the military science of the field, which were almost entirely lost. He had the honour to discover, to apply, and to diffuse them; but, if the most experienced judges may be credited, he did not introduce into those principles the modifications which the difference of men's minds, of constitutions, and of arms, would have required. The persons trained up under him, great captains as they were, could not venture to be more bold or more enlightened than himself; and this timid circumspection prevented the alterations and improvements which might have been made. Cohorn and Vauban alone instructed Europe in the art of defending, but especially in that of attacking places. It happened, by one of those contradictions which are sometimes observed among nations, as well as among individuals, that the French, notwithstanding their ardent and impetuous disposition, appeared more expert in sieges than any other nation; and that they seemed to acquire at the foot of the walls that patience and coolness, in which they are most commonly deficient in all other military operations.

The king of Prussia appeared, and with him a new order of things was introduced. Without suffering himself to be swayed by the authority of those who had gone before him, this prince created a system of tactics almost entirely new. He demonstrated, that troops, however numerous, might be disciplined and manœvered; that the motions of the greatest armies were not subject to calculations more complicated and less certain than those of the most feeble corps; and that the same springs by which one battalion was put in motion, when properly managed, and put together by a great commander, might set a hundred thousand men in motion. His genius suggested to him many scientific details, of which no man had previously entertained the least idea; and by giving, in a manner, the advantage to the legs over the arms, he introduced into his evolutions, and into his marches, a celerity, which is become necessary, and almost decisive, since armies have been unfortunately so much multiplied, and since they have been obliged to occupy a very extensive front.

This prince, who, since Alexander, hath not had his equal in history, for extent and variety of talents; who, without having been himself formed by Greeks, hath been able to form Lacedemonians; this monarch, in a word, who hath deserved beyond all others that his name should be recorded in his age, and who will have the glory, since it is one, of having carried the art of war to a degree of perfection, from which, fortunately, it cannot but degenerate,—Frederick hath seen all Europe adopt his institutions with enthusiasm. In imitation of the Roman people, who, by instructing themselves at the school of their enemies, learnt the art of resisting, of vanquishing, and of enslaving, them, the modern nations have endeavoured to follow the example of a neighbour, formidable by his military capacity, and who might become dangerous by his success. But have they accomplished their design? Some external parts of his discipline have undoubtedly been imitated; but let us be allowed to doubt whether his great principles have been perfectly understood, thoroughly investigated, and properly combined.

But even if this sublime and terrible doctrine were become common among the powers, would it be equally useful to them all? The Prussians never lose sight of it one moment.

They are ignorant of the intrigues of courts, the luxuries of cities, and the idleness of a country life. Their colours are their roofs, warlike songs their amusements, the recital of their first exploits their conversation, and fresh laurels their only hope. Eternally under arms, eternally in exercise, they have perpetually before them the image, and almost the reality, of a prudent and obstinate war, whether they be collected together in camps, or dispersed in garrisons.

Military men of all countries, draw the contrast between this description and that of your education, of your laws, and of your manners, and compare yourselves to such men, if you can. I will allow that the sound of the trumpet may rouse you from your lethargy, from balls, from public amusements; and that, from the arms of your mistresses, you may rush with eagerness into danger. But will a transient ardour supply the place of that vigilance, of that activity, of that application, and of that foresight, which can alone determine the operations of a war or of a campaign? Will a body, enervated by effeminate habits, resist the horrors of famine, the rigour of seasons, and the diversity of climates? Will a mind, ruled by the taste for pleasure, bend itself to regular, profound, and serious, reflections? In a heart replete with various and frivolous objects, will not one of them be found which may be incompatible with courage? On the borders of the Po, of the Rhine, and of the Danube, in the midst of those destructions and ravages which always attend upon his steps, will not the Frenchman, covered with dust, his strength exhausted, and destitute of every thing, turn his sorrowful eyes towards the smiling borders of the Loire or of the Seine? Will he not sigh after those ingenious diversions, those tender connections, those charming societies, and after those voluptuous delights, of every kind which he hath left there, and which await him at his return? Imbued with the absurd and unfortunate prejudice, that war, which is a profession for other nations, is only a rank or condition of life to him, will he not quit the camp as soon as he shall think he can do it without exposing his reputation too openly? If example, or circumstances, do not allow him to follow his inclination, will he not exhaust in a few months the income of ten years, to change a foraging party into a party

of pleasure, or to display his luxury at the head of the trenches? The dislike of his duties, and his indifference for public affairs, will they not expose him to the ridicule of an enemy, who may have different principles and a different rule of conduct!

It is not to the king of Prussia, but to Lewis XIV, that we must attribute that prodigious number of troops, which presents us with the idea of war, even in the midst of peace. By keeping always numerous armies on foot, that proud monarch obliged his neighbours, or his enemies, to exert efforts nearly similar. The contagion spread itself even among the princes who were too weak to raise disturbances, and too poor to keep them up. They sold the blood of their legions to the greater powers; and the number of soldiers was gradually raised in Europe to two millions.

The barbarous ages are spoken of with horror; and yet war was then only a period of violence and of commotions, but at present it is almost a natural state. Most governments are either military, or become so; even the improvement in our discipline is a proof of it. The security we enjoy in our fields, the tranquillity that prevails in our cities, whether troops are passing through, or are quartered in them; the police which reigns around the camps, and in garrisoned towns, proclaim indeed that arms are under some kind of controul, but at the same time indicate that every thing is subject to their power.

Fortunately, the hostilities of our days do not resemble those of former times. At those distant periods, the conquered provinces were laid waste, the towns subdued were reduced to ashes, the vanquished citizens were either put to death, or reduced to servitude. At present, war is much less cruel. When the battle is at an end, no more atrocious acts are committed; the prisoners are taken care of; the cities are no more destroyed, nor the countries ravaged. The contributions exacted from a subdued people scarce amount to as much as they paid for taxes before their misfortunes; and when they are restored by peace to their former masters, no alteration appears in their situation. When treaties insure their submission to the conqueror, they enjoy the same advantages as all the other subjects, and sometimes even several very important prerogatives. Accordingly, the nations, even those which are the least

enlightened, shew very little concern for these dissensions between princes; they consider those quarrels as disputes between one government and another; and they would behold these events with total indifference, were they not obliged to pay the mercenaries employed to support the ambition, the turbulence, or the caprices, of a tyrannical master.

These mercenaries are very ill paid. They cost the nation four or five times less than the meanest mechanic. They receive no more than what is absolutely necessary to keep them from starving. Notwithstanding this, the troops, the generals, the fortified places, the artillery, and the instruments of war, have been multiplied to such a degree, that the maintenance of them hath driven the people to despair. In order to provide for these expences, it hath been necessary to overburthen all the classes of society, which, pressing one upon another, must crush the lowest and the most useful of them, that of the husbandman. The increase of taxes, and the difficulty of collecting them, destroy, through want or distress, those very families which are the parents and nurseries of the armies.

If an universal oppression be the first inconvenience arising from the increase of soldiers, their idleness is a second. Let them be incessantly employed, but not to excess, as soon as the din of war shall no longer be heard, and their morals will be less dissolute, less contagious; the strength necessary to bear the fatigues of their profession will always be preserved, and their health will seldom be affected; they will no more be consumed by hunger, tedium, or affliction; desertions and quarrels will no more be common among them, and they may still be useful to society after the time of their service shall be expired. For a moderate increase of their pay, they will cheerfully make the roads over which they are to march; they will level the mountains they are to climb up; they will fortify the towns they are to defend; they will dig the canals from whence they are to derive their subsistence; they will improve the ports in which they are to embark; they will deliver the people from the most cruel and the most ignominious of all vexations, the labours of vassalage. After having expiated, by useful labours, the misfortune of being devoted, by their condition, to dissolute the earth, and to massacre the inha-

desolate

bitants, they will perhaps cease to be detested; they will perhaps one day attain the honour of being considered in the light of citizens.

The Romans were acquainted with these truths, and had made them the basis of their conduct. How is it come to pass that we, who were formerly the slaves, and who are become at present the disciples, of these masters of the world, have deviated so much from this important object of their principles? It is because Europe hath believed, and doth still believe, that men who are destined to handle arms, and to gather laurels, would be degraded by using instruments which are only in the hands of the lowest class of the people. How long will this absurd prejudice, formed in barbarous times, subsist? How long shall we still remain in the twelfth century?

A third inconvenience arising from the increase of soldiers, is a decrease of courage. Few men are born fit for war. If we except Lacedæmon and Rome, where women who were citizens, and free, brought forth soldiers; where children were lulled to sleep by, and awakened with, the sound of trumpets and songs of war; where education rendered men unnatural, and made them beings of a different species: all other nations have only had a few brave men among them. And, indeed, the less troops are raised, the better will they be. In the earlier ages of our ancestors, who were less civilized, but stronger than we are, armies were much less numerous than ours, but engagements were more decisive. It was necessary to be a noble or a rich man to serve in the army, which was looked upon both as an honour and a privilege. None but volunteers entered into the service. All their engagements ended with the campaign; and any man who disliked the art of war was at liberty to withdraw. Besides, there was then more of that ardour, and of that pride of sentiment, which constitutes true courage. At present, what glory is there in serving under absolute commanders, who judge of men by their size, estimate them by their pay, insist them by force or by stratagem, and keep or discharge them without their consent, as they have taken them? What honour is there in aspiring to the command of armies under the baneful influence of courts, where every thing is given or taken away without reason; where men without merit are raised,

and others, though innocent, are degraded by mere caprice; where the department of war is intrusted to a favourite, who hath not distinguished himself upon any occasion, and to whom the art of war is unknown both in theory and practice; where a favourite mistress marks with patches, upon a map spread out upon her toilet, the route which the army is to take; or where it is necessary to send to solicit permission at court before a battle can be given; a fatal delay, during which time the enemy may have changed his position, and the moment of victory be lost; where a general, without the consent of the prince, hath sometimes been commanded, under pain of disgrace, to suffer himself to be beaten; where jealousy, hatred, and a variety of other motives equally detestable, frustrate the hopes of a fortunate campaign; where, either through negligence or inability, camps are suffered to want provisions, forage, or ammunition; where the person who is to obey, to march, or to stop, to execute the motions concerted, betrays his commander, and sets discipline at defiance, without endangering his life? Accordingly, except in rising empires, or in the instant of a crisis, the greater number there are of soldiers in the state, the more is the nation weakened; and in proportion as a state is enfeebled, the number of its soldiers is increased.

A fourth inconvenience is, that the increase of soldiers tends to despotism. A number of troops, towns well-fortified, magazines and arsenals, may prevent invasions; but while they preserve a people from the irruptions of a conqueror, they do not secure them from the encroachments of a despotic prince. Such a number of soldiers serve only to keep those who are already slaves in chains. The tyrant then prevails, and makes every thing conform to his will, as every thing is subservient to his power. By the force of arms alone, he sets the opinions of men at defiance, and controuls their will. By the assistance of soldiers he levies taxes; and by these he raises soldiers. He imagines that his authority is shewn and exerted, by destroying what he hath formed; but his exertions are vain and fruitless. He is perpetually renewing his forces, without being ever able to recover the national strength. In vain do his soldiers keep his people in continual war; if his subjects tremble at his troops, his troops in return will fly from

the enemy. But in these circumstances, the loss of a battle is that of a kingdom. The minds of all men being alienated, they voluntarily submit to a foreign yoke; because, under the dominion of a conqueror, hope is still left; while, under that of a despot, nothing remains but fear. When the progress of the military government hath introduced despotism, then the nation exists no more. The soldiery soon becomes insolent and detested. Barrenness, occasioned by wretchedness and debauchery, is the cause of the extinction of families. A spirit of discord and hatred prevails among all orders of men, who are either corrupted or disgraced. Societies betray, sell, and plunder, each other, and give themselves up, one after another, to the scourges of the tyrant, who plunders, oppresses, destroys, and annihilates, them all. Such is the end of that art of war, which paves the way for a military government. Let us now consider what influence the navy has.

The ancients have transmitted to us almost all those arts that have been revived with the restoration of letters; but we have surpassed them in the military management of the navy. Tyre and Sidon, Carthage and Rome, scarce knew any sea but the Mediterranean; to sail through which it was only necessary to have rafts, galleys, and men to row them. Sea engagements might then be bloody; but it required no great skill to construct and equip the fleets. To pass from Europe into Africa, it was only necessary to be supplied with boats, which may be called flat-bottomed ones, which transmitted Carthaginians or Romans, the only people almost who were engaged in sea fights. Commerce was, fortunately, a greater object of attention to the Athenians, and the republics of Asia, than victories at sea.

After these famous nations had abandoned both the land and the sea to plunderers and to pirates, the navy remained, during twelve centuries, equally neglected with all the other arts. Those swarms of barbarians, who over-ran and totally destroyed Rome in its declining state, came from the Baltic upon rafts or canoes, to ravage and plunder our sea-coasts, without going far from the continent. These were not voyages, but descents upon the coast, that were continually renewed. The Danes and Normans were not

armed for a cruize, and scarce knew how to fight but upon land.

At length, chance or the Chinese supplied the Europeans with the compass, and this was the cause of the discovery of America. The needle, which taught sailors to know how far they were distant from the north, or how near they approached to it, emboldened them to attempt longer voyages, and to lose sight of land for whole months together. Geometry and astronomy taught them how to compute the progress of the constellations, to determine the longitude by them, and to judge pretty nearly how far they were advancing to the east and west. Even at that time, the height and the distance of vessels from the coast might always have been known. Though the knowledge of the longitude be much more inaccurate than that of the latitude, yet they both soon occasioned such improvement to be made in navigation, as to give rise to the art of carrying on war by sea. The first essay, however, of this art was made between galleys that were in possession of the Mediterranean. The most celebrated engagement of the modern navy was that of Lepanto, which was fought two centuries ago, between two hundred and five christians, and two hundred and sixty Turkish galleys. This prodigious armament was entirely constructed in Italy; a country from which almost every invention of art has been derived, though not preserved in it. But at that time, its trade, its population, were double what they are at present. Besides, those galleys were neither so long nor so large as those of our times, as we may judge from some of the old carcasses that are still preserved in the arsenal of Venice. The number of rowers amounted to one hundred and fifty, and the troops did not exceed fourscore men in one galley. At present, Venice hath more beautiful galleys, and less influence, upon that sea which the doge marries, and which other powers frequent and trade upon.

Galleys, indeed, were proper for criminals; but stronger vessels were required for soldiers. The art of constructing ships improved with that of navigation. Philip II, king of all Spain, and of the East and West Indies, employed all the docks of Spain and Portugal, of Naples and Sicily, which he then possessed, in constructing ships of an extraordinary size and strength; and his fleet assumed the title

of the Invincible armada. It consisted of one hundred and thirty ships, near one hundred of which were the largest that had yet been seen on the ocean. Twenty small ships followed this fleet, and sailed or fought under its protection. The pride of the Spaniards, in the sixteenth century, hath dwelt very much upon, and exaggerated, the pompous description of this formidable armament. But a circumstance which diffused terror and admiration two centuries ago, would now serve only to excite laughter. The largest of those ships would be no more than a third rate in our squadrons. They were so heavily armed, and so ill managed, that they could scarce move, or sail near the wind, nor board another vessel, nor could the ship be properly worked in tempestuous weather. The sailors were as awkward as the ships were heavy, and the pilots almost as ignorant as the sailors.

The English, who were already acquainted with the weakness and little skill of their enemies at sea, concluded that inexperience would occasion their defeat. They carefully avoided boarding these unwieldy machines, and burned a part of them. Some of these enormous galleons were taken, others disabled. A storm arose, in which most of the ships lost their anchors, and were abandoned by their crews to the fury of the waves, and cast away, some upon the western coasts of Scotland, others upon the coasts of Ireland. Scarce one half of this invincible fleet was able to return to Spain, where the damages it had suffered, joined to the terror of the sailors, spread a general consternation, from which Spain has never recovered. The Spaniards were for ever depressed by the loss of an armament that had cost three years preparation, and upon which all the forces and revenues of the kingdom had been almost exhausted.

The destruction of the Spanish navy occasioned the dominion of the sea to pass into the hands of the Dutch. The pride of their former tyrants could not be more signally punished than by the prosperity of a people, forced by oppression to break the yoke of regal authority. When this republic began to emerge from its sens, the rest of Europe was embroiled in civil wars by the spirit of fanaticism. Persecution drove men into Holland from all other states. The inquisition, which the house of Austria wished to ex-

tend over all parts of its dominions ; the persecution which Henry II raised in France ; the emissaries of Rome, who were supported in England by Mary ; every thing in a word, concurred to people Holland with an immense number of refugees. This country had neither lands nor harvest for their subsistence. They were obliged to seek it by sea throughout the whole universe. Almost all the commerce of Europe was engrossed by Lisbon, Cadiz, and Antwerp ; under one sovereign, whose power and ambition rendered him a general object of hatred and envy. The new republicans having escaped his tyranny, and being excited by resentment and necessity, became pirates, and formed a navy at the expence of the Spaniards and Portuguese, whom they held in utter aversion. France and England, who, in the progress of this rising republic, only perceived the humiliation of the house of Austria, assisted Holland in preserving the conquest and spoils she had made, the value of which she was yet unacquainted with. Thus the Dutch secured to themselves establishments wherever they chose to direct their forces ; fixed themselves in these acquisitions before the jealousy of other nations could be excited, and imperceptibly made themselves masters of all commerce by their industry, and of all the seas by the strength of their squadrons.

The domestic troubles in England were for a while favourable to this prosperity, which had been so silently acquired in remote countries. But at length Cromwell excited in his country an emulation for commerce, so natural to the inhabitants of an island. To share the empire of the seas with the English, was, in fact, to give it up to them ; and the Dutch were determined to maintain it. Instead of forming an alliance with England, they courageously resolved upon war. They carried it on for a long time with unequal force ; and this perseverance against misfortune preserved to them, at least, an honourable rivalship. Superiority in the construction and form of the ships often gave the victory to their enemies ; but the vanquished never met with any decisive losses.

In the meanwhile, these long and dreadful combats had exhausted, or at least diminished, the strength of the two nations, when Lewis XIV, willing to avail himself of their mutual weakness, aspired to the empire of the sea. When

this prince first assumed the reins of government, he found only eight or nine vessels in his harbours, and those very much decayed; neither were they ships of the first or second rate. Richelieu had perceived the necessity of raising a pier before Rochelle, but not of forming a navy; the idea of which must, however, have been conceived by Henry IV and his friend Sully. But it was reserved to the most brilliant age of the French nation to give birth to every improvement at once. Lewis, who conceived, at least, all the ideas of grandeur he did not himself suggest, inspired his subjects with the same passion which prevailed in him. Five ports were opened to the military navy. Docks and arsenals, equally convenient and magnificent, were constructed. The art of ship building, still very imperfect everywhere, was established upon more certain principles. A set of naval regulations, much superior to those of the other nations, and which they have since adopted, obtained the sanction of the laws. Seamen emerged from the midst of the ocean, as it were, already formed. In less than twenty years the harbours of the kingdom reckoned one hundred ships of the line.

The French navy first exerted its power against the people of Barbary, who were beaten. It afterwards obtained some advantages over the Spaniards. It then engaged the fleets of England and Holland, sometimes separately and sometimes combined, and generally obtained the honour and advantage of the victory. The first memorable defeat the French navy experienced was in 1692, when with forty ships they attacked ninety English and Dutch ships opposite La Hogue, in order to give the English a king they rejected, and who was not himself very desirous of the title. The most numerous fleet obtained the victory. James the second felt an involuntary pleasure at the triumph of the people who expelled him; as if at this instant the blind love of his country had prevailed within him, over his ambition for the throne. Since that day the naval powers of France have been upon the decline, and it was impossible that they should not be.

Lewis XIV, accustomed to carry on his enterprises with more haughtiness than method, more ambitious of appearing powerful than of being really so, had begun by completing the higher parts of his military navy before he had

settled its foundation. The only solid basis which could have been given to it would have been an extensive commercial navy, carried on with activity; and there was not even the shadow of such a thing existing in the kingdom. The trade with the East-Indies was still in its infancy. The Dutch had appropriated to themselves the small quantity of commodities which the American islands then produced. The French had not yet thought of giving to the great fisheries that degree of extension of which they were susceptible. There were no French vessels admitted in the northern harbours, and the southern very seldom saw any. The state had even given up its coasting trade to foreigners. Was it not therefore unavoidable, that this colossus should be overturned, and the illusion dissipated upon the first remarkable check which this proud display of power should receive.

From that period England acquired a superiority, which hath raised her to the greatest prosperity. A people, who are at present the most considerable power at sea, easily persuade themselves that they have always holden that empire. Sometimes they trace their maritime power to the era of Julius Cæsar; sometimes they assert that they have ruled over the ocean, at least, since the ninth century. Perhaps, some day or other, the Corsicans, who are at present a nation of little consequence, when they are become a maritime people, will record in their annals that they have always ruled over the Mediterranean. Such is the vanity of man, which must endeavour to aggrandize itself in past as well as future ages. Truth alone, which exists before all nations, and survives them all, informs us, that there hath been no navy in Europe from the christian era till the 16th century. The English themselves had no need of it; while they remained in possession of Normandy and of the coasts of France.

When Henry VIII was desirous of equipping a fleet, he was obliged to hire vessels from Hamburg, Lubeck, and Dantzic; but especially from Genoa and Venice, in which states it was only known how to build and conduct a fleet; which supplied sailors and admirals; and which gave to Europe a Columbus, an Americus, a Cabot, and a Verezani; those wonderful men, who by their discoveries have added so much to the extent of the globe. Elizabeth

was in want of a naval force against Spain, and permitted her subjects to fit out ships to act against the enemies of the state. This permission formed sailors for the service. The queen herself went to see a ship that had been round the world; on-board of which she embraced Drake, at the time she knighted him. She left forty-two men of war to her successors. James and Charles the First added some ships to the naval forces they had received from the throne; but the commanders of this navy were chosen from the nobility, who, satisfied with this mark of distinction, left the labours to the pilots; so that the art of navigation received no improvements.

There were few noblemen in the party that dethroned the Stuarts. Ships of the line were at that time given to captains of inferior birth, but of uncommon skill in navigation. They improved, and rendered the English navy illustrious.

When Charles II re-ascended the throne, the kingdom was possessed of six-and-fifty ships. The navy increased under his reign to the number of eighty-three, fifty-eight of which were ships of the line. Nevertheless, towards the latter days of this prince, it began to decline again. But his brother, James II, restored it to its former lustre, and raised it even to a greater degree of splendour. Being himself high-admiral before he came to the throne, he had invented the art of regulating the manœuvres of the fleet, by the signals of the flag. Happy, if he had better understood the art of governing a free people ! When the prince of Orange, his son-in-law, became possessed of his crown, the English navy consisted of one hundred and sixty-three vessels of all sizes, armed with seven thousand pieces of cannon, and equipped with forty-two thousand men. This force was doubled during the war that was carried on for the Spanish succession. It hath since so considerably increased, that the English think they are able alone to balance, by their maritime forces, the navy of the whole universe. England is now at sea what Rome formerly was upon land, when she began to decline.

The English nation considers its navy as the bulwark of its safety, and the source of its riches. On this they found all their hopes in times of peace as well as war. They therefore raise a fleet more willingly, and with greater ex-

the word "the" is a very common

* d. One. B. n. Das Kalifornien 800000 130.

pedition than a battalion. They spare no expence, and exert every political art to acquire seamen.

The foundations of this power were laid in the middle of the last century by the famous act of navigation, which secured to the English all the productions of their vast empire, and which promised them a great share in those of other regions. This law seemed to advise all people to think only of themselves. This lesson, however, hath been of no use hitherto; and no government hath made it the rule of their conduct. It is possible that the eyes of men may soon be opened; but Great Britain will however have enjoyed, during the space of more than a century, the fruits of its foresight; and will perhaps have acquired, during that long interval, sufficient strength to perpetuate her advantages. It may readily be supposed that she is inclined to employ all possible means to prevent the explosion of that mine which time is gradually and slowly digging under the foundation of her fortune, and to declare war against the first people who shall attempt to blow it up. Her formidable fleets impatiently expect the signal of hostilities. Their activity and their vigilance are redoubled, since it hath been decided that the prizes were to belong entirely to the officers and the crews of the victorious ship, since the state hath granted a gratuity of one hundred and thirty-two livres ten sols [5l. 10s. 5d.] to every person who should board, take, or sink, any of the enemy's ships. This allurements of gain will be increased, if it be necessary, by other rewards. Will the nations which are so habitually divided by their interests and by their jealousies consent together to suppress this boldness; and if one of them should undertake it separately, will it succeed in this terrible conflict?

The navy is a new species of power, which hath given the universe in some measure to Europe. This part of the globe, though so limited, hath acquired by its squadrons an absolute empire over the rest, which are much more extensive. It hath seized upon those regions that were suitable to it, and hath placed under its dependence the inhabitants and productions of all countries. A superiority so advantageous will last for ever, unless some event, which it is impossible to foresee, should disgust our descendants of an element in which shipwrecks are so frequent. As long

as they shall have any fleets remaining, they will pave the way for revolutions, they will draw along with them the destinies of nations, and they will be the levers of the world.

But it is not only to the extremities of the world, or in barbarous regions, that ships have carried terror, and dictated laws. Their influence hath been sensibly felt even in the midst of ourselves, and hath disturbed the ancient systems of things. A new kind of equilibrium hath been formed, and the balance of power hath been transferred from the continent to the maritime nations. In proportion as the nature of their forces brought them nearer to all countries bordering upon the ocean and its several gulfs, so they have had it in their power to do good or mischief to the greater number of states; consequently they must have had more allies, more consideration, and more influence. These advantages have been evident to the governments which, by their situation, were at hand to share them; and there is scarce any one which hath not exerted greater or less efforts to succeed in it.

Since nature hath decided that men must be in perpetual agitation upon our planet, that they should continually disturb it with their inquietude, it is a fortunate circumstance for modern times, that the forces of the sea should make a diversion from those of the land. A power which hath coasts to protect will not easily encroach upon the territories of its neighbours. It would require immense preparations, innumerable troops, arsenals of all kinds, and a double supply of means and of resources to execute its project of conquest. Since Europe hath employed its forces on the sea, it enjoys greater security than before. Its wars are perhaps as frequent and as bloody, but it is less ravaged and less weakened by them. The operations are carried on with greater harmony and with more regular plans; and there are less of those great effects which derange all systems. There are greater efforts, and less shocks. All the passions are turned towards one certain general good, one grand political aim, towards a happy employment of all the natural and moral powers, which is commerce.

The importance to which the navy has arisen will lead, in process of time, every thing which has a greater or less

distant affinity to it, to the degree of perfection it is susceptible of : till the middle of the last century an uncertain routine was followed in the construction of ships. *One knows not what the sea requires*, was still a common proverb. At this period geometry carried its attention to this art, which was becoming every day more interesting, and applied to it some of its principles. Since that, its attention has been more seriously engaged, and always with success. Matters, however, are still far from being brought to demonstration ; for there is still great variety in the dimensions adopted in the different docks.

In proportion as the navy became a science, it became a necessary object of study to those who engaged in this profession. They were made to understand, though very slowly, that those commanders who had general ideas, founded upon mathematical rules, would have a great superiority over officers, who, having nothing but habit to lead them, could only judge of the things they had to do from their analogy to those which they had already seen. Schools were opened on all sides, where young men were instructed in naval tactics, and in other knowledge of equal importance.

This was something, but it was not all. In a profession where the disposition of the sea and of the currents, the motion of the ships, the strength and variety of the winds, the frequent accidents from fire, the ordinary breaking of the sails and ropes, and many other circumstances, infinitely multiply the plans ; where, in the midst of the noise of cannon, and of the greatest dangers, one must instantly take a resolution which shall determine at once either victory or defeat ; where the evolutions must be so rapid, that they seem rather to be the effect of sentiment than the result of reflection ; in such a profession, the most learned theory cannot be sufficient. Deprived of that certain and speedy effect of sight, which practice, and that the most constant, can only give, it would lose in reflection the time for action. Experience must therefore complete the seaman, whose education hath been begun by the study of the exact sciences. In process of time, this union of theory with practice must prevail in every place where there are navigators, but nowhere more speedily than in an island, be-

cause arts are sooner brought to perfection, wherever they are of indispensable necessity.

For the same reason, in an island there will be better sailors, and more of them; but will they be treated with that justice and humanity which is due to them? Let us suppose that one of them, who hath fortunately escaped from the devouring heats of the line, from the horror of storms, and from the intemperature of climates, returns from a voyage of several years, and from the extremities of the globe. His wife expects him with impatience; his children are anxious to see a father whose name hath been repeated to them a multitude of times; he himself soothes his anxiety by the pleasing hope that he shall soon see again what is most dear to him in the world, and anticipates by his wishes the delightful moment when his heart will be comforted in the tender embraces of his family. All at once, at the approach of the shore, within sight of his country, he is forcibly taken out of the ship in which he had braved the fury of the waves in order to enrich his fellow-citizens, and is put, by a set of infamous satellites, on-board of a fleet, where thirty or forty thousand of his brave companions are to share his misfortunes, till the end of hostilities. In vain do their tears flow, in vain do they appeal to the laws; their destiny is irrevocably fixed. This is a feeble image of the atrociousness of the English mode of pressing.

In our absolute governments another mode is adopted; perhaps, in fact, as cruel, though apparently more moderate. The sailor is there enlisted, and for life. He is employed or disbanded at pleasure; his pay is regulated by caprice, which also fixes the period when he shall receive it. Both in time of peace, as in time of war, he hath never any will of his own, but is always under the rod of a subaltern despot, most commonly unjust, cruel, and interested. The greatest difference I can observe between these two modes is, that the former is only a temporary servitude, the latter is a slavery which hath no end.

Nevertheless, we shall find some apologists, and perhaps some admirers, of these inhuman customs. It will be said, that, in a state of society, the wills of individuals must always be subject to the general will; and that their convenience must always be sacrificed to the public good: Such hath been the practice of all nations and of all ages. It is

upon this basis alone that all institutions, ill or well planned, have been founded. They never will deviate from this central point, without hastening the inevitable period of their ruin.

Undoubtedly the republic must be served, and that by the citizens : but, is it not just that every one should contribute to this service, according to his means ? In order to preserve to the possessor of millions, often unjust, the entire enjoyment of his fortune and of his delights, must the unfortunate sailor be obliged to sacrifice two thirds of his salary, the wants of his family, and the most valuable of his property, his liberty ? Would not the country be served with more zeal, with more vigour and understanding, by men who should voluntarily devote to it all the natural and moral powers they have acquired, or exercised, upon all the seas, than by slaves, who are necessarily and incessantly employed in attending to the breaking of their chains ? Improperly will the administrators of empires allege, in justification of their atrocious conduct, that these navigators would refuse to employ their hands, and exert their courage in engagements, if they were not dragged to them against their inclinations. Every circumstance confirms that their most favourite object would be to follow their professions ; and it is demonstrated, that even if they had any dislike to it, still their necessities, which are ever renewed, would compel them to attend to it.

But wherefore should we not declare, that governments are as well convinced as those who censure them, of the injustice they commit towards their sailors ? but they choose rather to erect tyranny into a principle, than to own that it is impossible for them to be just. In the present state of things, all of them, and more especially some, have raised their naval forces beyond what their circumstances would allow. Their pride hath not yet suffered them to descend from that exaggerated grandeur with which they had intoxicated both themselves and their neighbours. The time will come, however, and it cannot be very distant, when it will be necessary to proportion armaments to the resources of an exhausted treasury. This will be a fortunate epocha for Europe, if it should follow so bright an example. That part of the world which possesses, at present three hundred and ninety-two ships of the line, and four times

times that number of ships of war of an inferior order, will derive great advantages from this revolution. The ocean will then be ploughed with fewer fleets, and those will consist of a less number of ships. The mercantile navy will be enriched from the military navy ; and commerce will acquire a greater degree of extension throughout the whole universe.

Commerce. COMMERCE produces nothing of itself ; for it is not of a plastic nature. Its business consists in exchanges. By its operations, a town, a province, a nation, a part of the globe, are disencumbered of what is useless to them, and receive what they are in want of. It is perpetually engaged in supplying the respective wants of men. Its knowledge, its funds, and its labours, are all devoted to this honourable and necessary office. Its influence could not exist without the arts and without cultivation : but these would be very insignificant without its influence. By pervading the earth, by crossing the seas, by raising the obstacles which opposes themselves to the intercourse of nations, by extending the sphere of wants and the thirst of enjoyments, it multiplies labour, it encourages industry, and becomes, in some measure, the moving principle of the world.

The Phœnicians were the first merchants of whom history hath preserved the remembrance. Situated on the borders of the sea, on the confines of Asia and Africa, to receive and dispense all the riches of the ancient world, they founded their colonies, and built their cities, with no other view but that of commerce. At Tyre, they were the masters of the Mediterranean ; at Carthage, they laid the foundations of a republic that traded, by the ocean, upon the richest of the European coasts.

The Greeks succeeded the Phœnicians, as the Romans did the Carthaginians and the Greeks : they held the dominion of the sea as well as of the land ; but they carried on no other kind of commerce, except that of conveying into Italy, for their own use, all the riches of Africa, Asia, and the conquered world. When Rome had invaded the whole world, and had lost all her acquisitions, commerce returned, as it were, to its original source towards the east. There it was established, while the barbarians

overran Europe. The empire was divided; the din of arms, and the art of war, remained in the west; Italy, however, preserved its communication with the Levant, where all the treasures of India were circulated.

The crusades exhausted in Asia all the rage of zeal and ambition, of war and fanaticism, with which the Europeans were possessed; but they were the cause of introducing into Europe a taste for Asiatic luxury, and redeemed, by giving rise to some degree of traffic and industry, the blood and the lives they had cost. Three centuries, taken up in wars and voyages to the east, gave to the restless spirit of Europe a recruit it stood in need of, that it might not perish by a kind of internal consumption: they prepared the way for that exertion of genius and activity, which since arose, and displayed itself in the conquest and trade of the East Indies, and of America.

The Portuguese attempted, by degrees, and with circumsppection, to double the African coast. It was not till after fourscore years of labours and of war, and after having made themselves masters of all the western coast of that vast region, that they ventured to double the Cape of Good Hope. The honour of clearing this formidable barrier was reserved to Vasco de Gama, in 1497, who at length reached the coast of Malabar, where all the treasures of the most fertile countries of Asia were to be circulated. This was the scene on which the Portuguese displayed all their conquests.

While this nation made itself master of the articles of trade, the Spaniards seized upon that which purchases them, the mines of gold and silver. These metals became not only a standard to regulate the value, but also the object, of commerce. In this double use they soon engrossed all the rest. All nations were in want of them to facilitate the exchange of their commodities, and obtain the conveniencies they stood in need of. The luxury and the circulation of money in the south of Europe, changed the nature as well as the direction of commerce, at the same time that it extended its bounds.

In the meanwhile, the two nations that had subdued the East and West Indies, neglected arts and agriculture. They imagined every thing was to be obtained by gold, without considering that it is labour alone that procures it:

they were convinced, though late, and at their own expence, that the industry which they lost was more valuable than the riches they acquired; and the Dutch taught them this severe lesson.

The Spaniards and the Portuguese, though possessed of all the gold in the world, remained or became poor; the Dutch presently acquired riches, without either lands or mines. As soon as these intrepid republicans had taken refuge in the midst of the seas, with liberty their tutelary divinity, they perceived that their morasses would never be any thing more than the seat of their habitation, and that they should be obliged to seek resources and subsistence elsewhere. They cast their eyes over the globe, and said to themselves, "the whole world is our domain; we will enjoy it by navigation and commerce. The revolutions which shall happen upon this immense and perpetually agitated scene, will never be concealed from our knowledge. Indolence and activity, slavery and independence, barbarism and civilization, opulence and poverty, culture and industry, purchases and sales, the vices and the virtues of men, we will turn them all to our advantage. We will encourage the labours of the nations, or we will impede their prosperity; we will urge them on to war, or we will endeavour to restore tranquillity among them, as it may be most suitable to our own interests."

Till that period, Flanders had been the centre of communication between the north and the south of Europe. The United provinces of Holland, which had detached themselves from it in order to belong only to themselves, took its place, and became, in their turn, the staple of all the powers which had more or less exchanges to make.

The ambition of the new republic was limited to this first advantage. After having drawn into its ports the productions of other countries, its navigators went themselves in quest of them. Holland soon became an immense magazine, where all the productions of the several climates were collected; and this union of so many important objects increased continually, in proportion as the wants of the people were multiplied, with the means of satisfying them. One merchandize attracted another. The commodities of the Old World invited those of the New. One purchaser

as it is the case with a man who is more or less frequently

in a state of mind, he is more or less pleased with it—

brought another ; and the treasures already acquired became a certain method of acquiring more.

Every circumstance was favourable to the rise and progress of the commerce of this republic. Its position on the borders of the sea, at the mouths of several great rivers ; its proximity to the most fertile or best cultivated lands of Europe ; its natural connections with England and Germany, which defended it against France ; the little extent and fertility of its own soil, which obliged the inhabitants to become fishermen, sailors, brokers, bankers, carriers, and commissaries ; in a word, to endeavour to live by industry for want of territory. Moral causes contributed, with those of the climate and the soil, to establish and advance its prosperity. The liberty of its government, which opened an asylum to all strangers dissatisfied with their own ; the freedom of its religion, which permitted a public and quiet profession of all other modes of worship ; that is to say, the agreement of the voice of nature with that of conscience, of interests with duty ; in a word, that toleration, that universal religion of all equitable and enlightened minds, friends to heaven and earth ; to God, as to their father ; to men, as to their brethren. Finally, this commercial republic found out the secret of availing itself of all events, and of making even the calamities and vices of other nations concur in advancing its felicity. It turned to its own advantage the civil wars which fanaticism had raised among people of a restless spirit, or which patriotism had excited among a free people ; it profited by the indolence and ignorance which bigotry supported among two nations who were under the influence of the imagination.

This spirit of industry in Holland, with which was intermixed a considerable share of that political art which sows the seeds of jealousy and discord among the nations, at length excited the attention of other powers. The English were the first to perceive that traffic might be carried on without the interposition of the Dutch. England, where the encroachments of despotism had given birth to liberty, because they were antecedent to corruption and effeminacy, was desirous of obtaining riches by labour, which is their antidote. The English first considered commerce as the proper science and support of an enlightened, powerful, and even a virtuous, people. They considered it rather a

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an improvement of industry than an acquisition of enjoyments; rather as an encouragement and a source of activity in favour of population, than as a promoter of luxury and magnificence, for the purpose of parade. Invited to trade by their situation, this became the spirit of their government and the means of their ambition. All their schemes tended to this great object. In other monarchies, trade is carried on by the people; in this happy constitution by the state, or the whole nation: she carries it on indeed with a constant desire of dominion, which implies that of enslaving other people, but by means, at least, which constitute the happiness of the world before it is subdued. By war, the conqueror is little happier than the conquered, because injuries and massacres are their mutual object; but by commerce, the conquering people necessarily introduce industry into the country, which they would not have subdued if it had been already industrious, or in which they would not maintain themselves, if they had not brought industry in along with them. Upon these principles England had founded her commerce and her empire, and mutually and alternately extended one by the other.

The French, situated under as favourable a sky, and upon as happy a soil, have, for a long time, flattered themselves with the idea that they had much to give to other nations, without being under a necessity of asking scarce any return. But Colbert was sensible that in the ferment Europe was in at that time, there would be an evident advantage for the culture and productions of a country that should employ those of the whole world. He opened manufactures for all the arts, the woollens, silks, dyes, embroideries, the gold and silver stuffs; all acquired, in the establishments the operations of which he directed, a degree of perfection, which the other manufactures could not attain. To increase the utility of these arts, it was necessary to possess the materials for them. The culture of them was encouraged according to the diversity of climates and territory. Some of them were required even of the provinces of the kingdom, and the rest from the colonies which chance had given it in the New World, as well as from all the navigators who had for a century past infested the seas with their robberies. The nation must then necessarily have made a double profit upon the materials and the work-

manship of the manufactures. The French pursued, for a long time, this precarious and temporary object of commerce, with an activity and spirit of emulation which must have made them greatly surpass their rivals ; and they still enjoy that superiority over other nations in all those arts of luxury and ornament which procure riches to industry.

The natural volatility of the national character, and its propensity to trifling pursuits, hath brought treasures to the state, by the taste that has fortunately prevailed for its fashions. Like to that light and delicate sex, which teaches and inspires us with a taste for dress, the French reign in all courts, and in all regions, respecting every thing that concerns ornament or magnificence ; and their art of pleasing is one of the mysterious sources of their fortune and power. Other nations have subdued the world by those simple and rustic manners, which constitute the virtues that are fit for war : to them it was given to reign over it by their vices. Their empire will continue, till being degraded and enslaved by their masters, by exertions of authority equally arbitrary and unlimited, they will become contemptible in their own eyes. Then they will lose, with their confidence in themselves, that industry, which is one of the sources of their opulence and of the springs of their activity.

Germany, which hath only a few ports, and those bad ones, hath been obliged to behold, with an indifferent or a jealous eye, its ambitious neighbours enriching themselves with the spoils of the sea, and of the East and West Indies. Its industry hath been restrained even upon its frontiers, which were perpetually ravaged by destructive wars, and as far as into the interior part of its provinces, by the nature of its constitution, which is singularly complicated. A great deal of time, extensive knowledge, and considerable efforts, would be requisite, to establish a commerce of any importance in a region where every thing seemed unfavourable to it. This period, however, is now at hand. Flax and hemp are already industriously cultivated, and appear under agreeable forms. Wool and cotton are wrought with skill ; and other manufactures are begun or improved. If, as the laborious and steady character of the inhabitants induces us to hope, the empire should ever attain to the advantage of paying, with its own productions and manufac-

tures, for those which it is obliged to provide itself with from other nations, and to preserve within itself the metals which are extracted from its mines, it will soon become one of the most opulent countries of Europe.

It would be absurd to announce so brilliant a destiny to the northern nations, although commerce hath also begun to meliorate their condition. The iron of their rude climate, which formerly served only for their mutual destruction, hath been turned to uses beneficial to mankind; and part of that which they used to deliver in its rough state, is never sold at present till after it hath been wrought. They have found a mart for their naval stores at a higher price than they were formerly sold for, before navigation had acquired that prodigious extension which astonishes us. If some of these people indolently wait for purchasers in their harbours, others carry out their productions themselves into foreign ports; and this activity extends their ideas, their transactions, and their advantages.

This new principle of the moral world hath insinuated itself by degrees, till it is become, as it were, necessary to the formation and existence of political bodies. The taste for luxury and conveniencies hath produced the love of labour, which at present constitutes the chief strength of a state. The sedentary occupations of the mechanic arts indeed render men more liable to be affected by the injuries of the seasons, less fit to be exposed to the open air, which is the first nutritive principle of life. But still it is better that the human race should be enervated under the roofs of the workshops, than inured to hardships under tents; because war destroys, while commerce, on the contrary, gives new life to every thing. By this useful revolution in manners, the general maxims of politics have altered the face of Europe. It is no longer a people immersed in poverty that becomes formidable to a rich nation. Power is at present an attendant on riches, because they are no longer the fruit of conquest, but the produce of constant labour, and of a life spent in perpetual employment. Gold and silver corrupt only those indolent minds which indulge in the delights of luxury, upon that stage of intrigue and meanness, that is called greatness. But these metals employ the hands and arms of the people; they excite a spirit of agriculture in the fields, of navigation in the maritime cities, and in the centre of

the state they lead to the manufacturing of arms, clothing, furniture, and the construction of buildings. A spirit of emulation exists between man and nature : they are perpetually improving each other. The people are formed and fashioned by the arts they profess. If there be some occupations which soften and degenerate the human race, there are others by which it is hardened and repaired. If it be true that art renders them unnatural, they do not, at least, propagate in order to destroy themselves, as among the barbarous nations in heroic times. It is certainly an easy, as well as a captivating, subject, to describe the Romans with the single art of war subduing all the other arts, all other nations indolent or commercial, civilized or savage ; breaking or despising the vases of Corinth ; more happy with their gods made of clay, than with the golden statues of their worthless emperors. But it is a more pleasing, and perhaps a nobler sight, to behold all Europe peopled with laborious nations, who are continually sailing round the globe, in order to cultivate and render it fit for mankind ; to see them animate, by the enlivening breath of industry, all the regenerating powers of nature ; seek in the abyss of the ocean, and in the bowels of rocks, for new means of subsistence, or new enjoyments ; stir and raise up the earth with all the mechanic powers invented by genius ; establish between the two hemispheres, by the happy improvements in the art of navigation, a communication of flying bridges, as it were, that reunite one continent to the other ; pursue all the tracks of the sun, overcome its annual barriers, and pass from the tropics to the poles upon the wings of the wind ; in a word, to see them open all the streams of population and pleasure in order to pour them upon the face of the earth through a thousand channels. It is then, perhaps, that the Divinity contemplates his work with satisfaction, and does not repent himself of having made man.

Such is the image of commerce ; let us now admire the genius of the merchant. The same understanding that Newton had to calculate the motion of the stars, the merchant exerts in tracing the progress of the commercial people that fertilize the earth. His problems are the more difficult to resolve, as the circumstances of them are not taken from the immutable laws of nature, as the systems of the geometrician are ; but depend upon the caprices of

men, and the uncertainty of a thousand complicated events. That accurate spirit of combination that Cromwell and Richelieu must have had, the one to destroy, the other to establish, despotic government, the merchant also possesses and carries it further: for he takes in both worlds at one view, and directs his operations upon an infinite variety of relative considerations, which it is seldom given to the statesman, or even to the philosopher, to comprehend and estimate. Nothing must escape him; he must foresee the influence of the seasons upon the plenty, the scarcity, and the quality, of provisions; upon the departure or return of his ships; the influence of political affairs upon those of commerce; the changes which war or peace must necessarily occasion in the prices and demands for merchandize, in the quantity and choice of provisions, in the state of the cities and ports of the whole world; he must know the consequences that an alliance of the two northern nations may have under the torrid zone; the progress, either towards aggrandizement or decay, of the several trading companies; the effect that the fall of any European power in India may have over Africa and America; the stagnation that may be produced in certain countries by the blocking up of some channels of industry; the reciprocal connection there is between most branches of trade, and the mutual assistances they lend by the temporary injuries they seem to inflict upon each other; he must know the proper time to begin and when to stop in every new undertaking; in a word, he must be acquainted with the art of making all other nations tributary to his own, and of increasing his own fortune by increasing the prosperity of his country; or rather he must know how to enrich himself by extending the general prosperity of mankind. Such are the objects that the profession of the merchant engages him to attend to: and still this is not the whole extent of them.

Commerce is a science which requires the knowledge of men still more than of things. Its difficulties arise less from the multiplicity of its transactions than from the avidity of those who are engaged in them. It is therefore necessary to treat with them apparently as if we were convinced of their good faith, and at the same time to take as many precautions as if they were destitute of every principle.

Almost all men are honest out of their own profession ; but there are few who, in the exercise of it, conform to the rules of scrupulous probity. This vice, which prevails from the highest to the lowest ranks, arises from the great number of malversations introduced by time and excused by custom. Personal interest and general habit conceal the crime and the meanness of such proceedings. " I do no more," it is said, " than what others do : " and thus we accustom ourselves to commit actions which our conscience soon ceases to reproach us with.

These kinds of fraud do not appear so in the eyes of those who indulge themselves in them. As they are common to all professions, do they not reciprocally expiate each other ? I take out of the purse of those who deal with me, what those whom I have dealt with have taken too much out of mine. Will it be required, that a merchant, a workman, or any individual whatever, should suffer the tacit and secret oppressions of all those to whom his daily wants oblige him to address himself, without ever seeking his indemnity from any one of them ? since every thing is compensated by general injustice, all will be as well as if the most rigid justice prevailed.

But can there be any kind of compensation in these rapines of detail exercised by one class of citizens over all the rest, or in those exercised by the latter over the former ? Are all professions in equal want of each other ? Several of them, which are exposed to frauds incessantly renewed, do they not mostly want opportunities of imposing in their turn ? Do not circumstances make an alteration from one day to another in the proportion there is between these impositions ? These observations will perhaps appear too trifling ; let us therefore be allowed to dwell upon one more important reflection. Will any wise man think it to be a matter of indifference that iniquity should be practised with impunity, and almost with universal consent ; in all states ; that the body of a nation should be corrupt, and to a degree of corruption that knows neither restraint nor bounds ; and that there is a material difference between a theft which hath the sanction of custom and is daily repeated, and any other possible act of injustice ?

The evil must, however, be thought irremediable at least with respect to retail trades, since the only system of mora-

lity applicable to those who follow them is comprised in these maxims : " Endeavour not to be dishonoured in your profession. If you sell dearer than other people, keep up at least the reputation of selling better merchandize. Gain as much as you can ; and especially avoid the having of two prices for your goods. Make your fortune as speedily as you can. If you should not be ill spoken of, and should not forfeit your character, all is well." Honester principles might be substituted to these ; but it would be in vain. The trifling daily profits, those niggardly savings which constitute essential resources in some professions, lower and degrade the soul, and extinguish in it all sense of dignity, and nothing truly laudable can be either recommended to, or expected from, a species of men who have arrived to such a pitch of degradation.

It is not the same thing with those whose speculations embrace all the countries of the earth, whose complicated operations connect the most distant nations, and by whose means the whole universe becomes one single family. These men may have a noble idea of their profession, and it is almost unnecessary to say to most of them, be honest in your dealings ; because dishonesty, while it would be prejudicial to yourselves, would also be injurious to your fellow-citizens, and asperse the character of your nation.

Do not abuse your credit ; that is to say, in case of any unexpected misfortune, let your own funds be able to replace those you have obtained from the confidence which your correspondents have reposed in your knowledge, your talents, and your probity. In the midst of the subversion of your fortunes, shew yourselves similar to those great trees which the thunder hath thrown down, but which still preserve all their appearance of majesty.

You will mistrust yourselves so much the more, as you are almost always the only judges of your own probity.

I know very well that you will be always respected by the multitude as long as you are wealthy ; but how will you appear in your own eyes ? If you have no regard for your own esteem, heap up gold upon gold and be happy, if it be possible for a man destitute of morals to be so.

You must undoubtedly have retained as you ought, some religious principles. Remember, therefore, that a time will

come when your conscience will reproach you for riches dishonestly acquired, and which you must restore, unless, like madmen, you set at defiance a Judge who is ready to call you to a rigid account of them.

Serve all nations ; but whatever advantage may be offered to you from speculation, give it up, if it should be injurious to your own country.

Let your word be sacred. Be ruined if it be necessary, rather than break it ; and shew that honour is more precious to you than gold.

Do not embrace too many objects at once. Whatever strength of mind you may have, or however extensive your genius may be, remember that the common day of the labouring man consists of little more than six hours, and that all affairs which may require a longer day, would be necessarily intrusted to your subaltern assistants. A chaos would soon be formed around you, in dissipating of which you might find yourself plunged from the summit of prosperity, where you imagine yourself to be, to the bottomless pit of misfortune.

I shall never cease to recommend order to you : without it, every thing becomes uncertain, Nothing is done, or every thing is ill and hastily done. Neglect renders all undertakings equally ruinous.

Although there be perhaps not one government honest enough to induce an individual to assist it with his credit, nevertheless I advise you to run the chance of it : but let not this assistance exceed your own fortune. You may injure yourself or your country, but none but yourself. The love of one's country must be subordinate to the laws of honour and of justice.

Never put yourself under the necessity of displaying your sorrows and your despair to a court, who will coolly allege to you the public necessity, and will make you the shameful offer of a safe conduct. It is in you that the foreigners and the citizens have placed their confidence, and not in the ministry of a nation. It is in your hands that they have deposited their funds, and nothing can screen you from their reproaches and from those of your conscience, if you have one.

You will be exceedingly prudent if you form no other

enterprises, except those which may miscarry, without affecting your family or disturbing your repose.

Be neither pusillanimous nor rash. Pusillanimity would keep you in a state of mediocrity ; rashness might deprive you in one day of the fruit of several years labour.

There is no comparison to be made between fortune and credit. Fortune without credit is of little consequence. Credit without fortune is unlimited. As long as credit remains, ruin is not completed ; but the least shock to your credit may be followed by the worst of catastrophes. I have known an instance in which, at the end of twenty years, it had not yet been forgotten, that an opulent company had stopped payment for the space of four-and-twenty hours.

The credit of a merchant is recovered with still greater difficulty than the honour of a woman : nothing but a kind of miracle can put a stop to an alarm which spreads itself instantaneously from one hemisphere of the globe to the other.

The merchant ought not to be less jealous of his credit, than the military man of his honour.

If you have any elevation of mind, you will rather choose to serve your fellow citizens with less advantage, than foreigners at a less risk, with less trouble, and with more profit.

Prefer an honest to a more lucrative speculation.

It hath been said, that the merchant, the banker, and the factor, being citizens of the world by profession, were not citizens of any particular country. Let such injurious discourse no longer be holden against you.

If, when you quit trade, you should only enjoy among your fellow-citizens that degree of consideration granted to considerable riches, you will not have acquired every thing which you might have obtained from commerce.

The contempt of riches is perhaps incompatible with the spirit of commerce : but woe be to those in whom that spirit should exclude all sentiments of honour.

I have raised an altar in my heart to four classes of citizens : to the philosopher, who searches after truth, who enlightens the nations, and who preaches, by his example, virtue to men ; to the magistrate, who knows how to main-

tain an equal balance of justice ; to the military man who defends his country ; and to the honest merchant, who enriches and honours it. The husbandman, by whom we are fed, will excuse me for having forgotten him.

If the merchant doth not consider himself among this distinguished rank of citizens, he doth not hold himself in sufficient estimation. He forgets that in his morning's work a few strokes of his pen put the four quarters of the world in motion for their mutual happiness.

Suffer not yourselves to indulge any base jealousy for the prosperity of another. If you thwart his operations without any motive, you are a bad man ; and if you happen to discover his operations, and appropriate them to yourself, you will have robbed him.

The influence of gold is as fatal to individuals as to nations. If you do not take care, you will be intoxicated with it. You will be desirous of heaping wealth upon wealth, and you will become either avaricious or prodigal. If you be avaricious, you will be rigid, and the sentiment of commiseration and benevolence will be extinguished within you. If you be prodigal, after having wasted the prime of your life in acquiring riches, you will be reduced to indigence by extravagant expences ; and if you should escape this misfortune, you will not escape contempt.

Open sometimes your purse to the unfortunate and industrious man.

If you wish to be honoured during your life, and after your death, consecrate a part of your fortune to some monument of public utility. Woe to your heirs, if they be displeased at this expence.

Remember that when a man dies who hath nothing but his wealth to boast of, he is no loss to society.

These maxims, which we have allowed ourselves to recal to the memory of man, have always been, and will always be, true. If it should happen that they should appear problematical to some of those persons whose actions they are intended to regulate, the public authority must be blamed for it. The rapacious and servile treasury encourage in all parts private injustice, by the general acts of injustice they are seen to commit. They oppress commerce with the numberless imposts they lay upon it ; they degrade the merchant, by the injurious suspicions which they are incess-

santly throwing out against his probity; they render, in some measure, fraud necessary, by the fatal invention of monopolies.

Monopoly is the exclusive privilege of one citizen, over all others, to buy, or to sell. At this definition every sensible man will start, and say,—among citizens, all equals, all serving society, all contributing to its expences, in proportion to their means, how is it possible that one of them should have a right, of which another is legally deprived? What matter, then, is this, so sacred in its nature, that any man whatever cannot acquire it, if he be in want of it; or dispose of it, if it should belong to him?

If any one could pretend to this privilege, it would undoubtedly be the sovereign. Nevertheless, he cannot do it, for he is nothing more than the first of the citizens. The body of the nation may gratify him with it; but then it is only an act of deference, and not the consequence of a prerogative, which would necessarily be tyrannical. If, therefore, the sovereign cannot arrogate it to himself, much less can he confer it upon another. We cannot give away what is not our legitimate property.

But if, contrary to the nature of things, there should exist a people, having some pretensions to liberty, and where the chief hath nevertheless arrogated to himself, or conferred a monopoly on another, what hath been the consequence of this infringement of general rights? Rebellion undoubtedly. No; it ought to have been, although it has not. The reason of this is, that a society is an assemblage of men, employed in different functions, having different interests, jealous, pusillanimous, preferring the peaceable enjoyment of what is left them, to the having recourse to arms in the defence of what is taken from them; living by the side of each other, and pressing upon each other, without any concurrence of inclination: it is because this unanimity, so useful, if even it should subsist among them, would neither give them the courage nor the strength they are in want of, and consequently neither the hope of conquering, nor the resolution of perishing: it is because they would see for themselves an imminent danger in a fruitless attempt, while in success they would see only advantages for their descendants, whom they have less regard for than they have for themselves. Sometimes, however, this circumstance hath

happened : yes, but it was brought about by the enthusiasm of fanaticism.

But in whatever country monopoly may have taken place, it hath produced nothing but devastation. Exclusive privileges have ruined the Old and the New World. There is no infant colony in the New Hemisphere which hath not been either weakened or destroyed by it. In our hemisphere, there is no flourishing country the splendour of which it hath not extinguished ; no enterprize, however brilliant, which it hath not obscured ; no circumstance, more or less flattering, which it hath not turned to the general detriment.

But by what fatality hath all this happened ? It was not a fatality, but a necessity. It hath been done, because it was necessary it should be done, and for this reason : because the possessor of a privilege, however powerful he may be, can never have either the credit or the resources of a whole nation : because his monopoly not being able to last for ever, he avails himself of it as fast as he can, sees nothing but the present moment, and every thing which is beyond the term of his exclusive privilege is nothing to him ; he chooses rather to be less rich without waiting, than more rich by waiting. By an instinct natural to man, whose enjoyments are founded upon injustice, tyranny, and vexation, he is perpetually in dread of the suppression of a privilege fatal to all. This has happened, because his interest is all to himself, and the interest of the nation is nothing to him : it is because, for a small and momentary advantage, but for a certain one, he scruples not to do a great and permanent mischief : it is because the exclusive privilege, when it comes to the spot where it is to be exercised, introduces along with it the train of all persecutions : it is because, by the folly, the vague extent, or the extension, of the terms of his grant, and by the power of him who hath either granted or protects it, he becomes master of all, interferes with every thing ; he restrains and destroys every thing ; he will annihilate a branch of industry useful to all, in order to compel another branch, prejudicial to all but himself ; he will pretend to command the soil, as he hath commanded the labours, and the ground must cease producing what is proper to it, in order to produce only what is suitable to the monopoly, or to become barren ; for

he will prefer barrenness to a fertility which interferes with him, and scarcity which he does not feel, to plenty which might diminish his profits: it is because, according to the nature of the thing of which he hath got the exclusive trade, if it be an article of primary necessity, he will starve at once a whole country, or leave it quite bare; if it be not an article of primary necessity, he will soon be able, by indirect means, to make it one, and he will still starve, and leave quite bare, the country, which he will easily deprive of the means of acquiring this article: it is because it is almost possible for him, who is the sole vender, to make himself, by contrivances as artful and deep as they are atrocious, the only buyer; and that then he will put at pleasure the article he sells at a very exorbitant price, and that which the people are obliged to sell to him at a very low one. Then it is, that the seller, being disgusted of a branch of industry, of a culture and of a labour which doth not bring him an equivalent of his expences, every thing goes to ruin, and the nation falls into misery.

The term of the exclusive privilege expires, and the possessor of it retires opulent; but the opulence of a single man, raised upon the ruin of the multitude, is a great evil; and, therefore, why hath it not been obviated? Wherefore is it not opposed? From the prejudice, as *cruel* as it is *absurd*, that it is a matter of indifference to the state, whether wealth be in the purse of one man, or of another; whether it be confined to one man, or distributed among several. *Absurd*, because in all cases, and especially in those of great necessity, the sovereign addresses himself to the nation; that is, to a great number of men, who possess scarce any thing, and whose ruin is completed by the little that is taken from them; and to a very small number of men, who possess a great deal, and who give a little, or indeed who never give in proportion to what they possess, and whose contribution, if even it were upon a level with their wealth, would never yield the hundredth part of what might have been obtained, without exaction and without murmur, from a numerous set of people in easy circumstances. *Cruel*, because, with equal advantages, it would be an act of inhumanity to compel the multitude to want and to suffer.

But is the exclusive privilege gratuitously granted? Sometimes; and it is then a mark of acknowledgment either

for great services, or for a long train of mean servilities, or the result of the intrigues of a series of subalterns, bought and sold ; one extremity of which series comes from the lowest classes of society, while the other is contiguous to the throne ; and that is what is called protection. When sold, it is never for its full value, and that for several reasons. It is impossible that the price paid for it can compensate for the ravages it occasions. Its value cannot yet be known, neither by the chief of the nation, who knows nothing, nor by his representative, who is often as ill informed, beside that he is sometimes a traitor to his master and to his country ; nor even by the purchaser himself, who always calculates his acquisition by the rate of its least produce. In a word, these shameful bargains being mostly made in times of crisis, the administration accepts a sum little proportioned to the value of the thing, but advanced in the moment of urgent necessity, or, what is more common, of urgent caprice.

Lastly, let us examine what is the result of these monopolies repeated, and of the disasters which attend them ; the ruin of the state, and the contempt of public faith. After these acts of infidelity, which cannot be mentioned without exciting a blush, the nation is plunged into desolation. In the midst of several millions of unfortunate wretches, there arises the proud head of some extortioners, gorged with riches, and insulting over the misery of all. The empire, enervated, totters for some time on the borders of the abyss into which it falls, amongst the acclamations of contempt and ridicule from its neighbours ; unless Heaven should raise up a saviour in its favour, whom it always expects, but who doth not always arrive, or who is soon disgusted by the general persecution he experiences from those villains of whom he is the terror.

The obstacles with which the several governments clog the trade which their subjects either carry on, or ought to carry on, among themselves, are still much more multiplied in that trade which is carried on between one state and the rest. This jealousy of the powers, which is almost of moderate date, might be taken for a secret conspiracy to ruin each other, without advantage to any one of them.

Those who govern the people exert the same skill in guarding against the industry of the nations, as in preserv-

ing themselves from the artifices of intriguing men by whom they are surrounded. Acts of violence and reciprocal enmity universally prevail in all parts. Some ignorant, mean, and corrupt, men have filled Europe, and the whole world, with a multitude of unbearable restraints, which have been more and more extended. Centinels and obstacles are placed in every part of the sea and of the land. The traveller enjoys no repose; the merchant no property; both are equally exposed to all the snares of an insidious legislation, that gives rise to crimes by its prohibitions, and to penalties by crimes. Men become culpable without knowing it, or without design; are arrested, plundered, and taxed, without having any thing to reproach themselves with. Such is the state of commerce in time of peace. But what shall we say of commercial wars?

It is natural enough for a people, pent up in the icy regions of the north, to dig out iron from the bowels of the earth that refuses them subsistence, and to reap the harvest of another nation by force of arms: hunger, which is restrained by no laws, cannot violate any, and seems to plead an excuse for these hostilities. Men must necessarily live by plunder, when they have no corn. But when a nation enjoys the privilege of an extensive commerce, and can supply several other states from its superfluity, what motive can induce it to declare war against other industrious nations, to obstruct their navigation and their labours; in a word, to forbid them to live, on pain of death? Why does it arrogate to itself an exclusive branch of trade, a right of fishing and of navigation, as if it were a matter of property, and as if the sea were to be divided into acres as well as the land? The motives of such wars are easily discovered: we know that the jealousy of commerce is nothing more than a jealousy of power. But have any people a right to obstruct a work they cannot execute themselves, and to condemn another nation to indolence, because they themselves choose to be entirely given up to it?

How unnatural and contradictory an expression is a war of commerce! Commerce is the source and means of subsistence; war of destruction. Commerce may, possibly, give rise to war, and continue it; but war puts a stop to every branch of commerce. Whatever advantage one nation may derive from another in trade becomes a motive of

industry and emulation to both : in war, on the contrary, the injury affects both ; for plunder, fire, and sword, can neither improve lands nor enrich mankind. The wars of commerce are so much the more fatal, as by the present superiority of the maritime powers over those of the continent, and of Europe over the three other parts of the world, the conflagration becomes general ; and that the dissensions of two maritime powers excite the spirit of discord among all their allies, and occasion inactivity even among the neutral powers.

Coasts and seas stained with blood, and covered with dead bodies ; the horrors of war extending from pole to pole, between Africa, Asia, and America, as well throughout the sea that separates us from the New World, as throughout the vast extent of the Pacific ocean : such has been the spectacle exhibited in the two last wars, in which all the powers of Europe have been alternately shaken, or have distinguished themselves by some remarkable exertion. In the meanwhile, the earth was depopulated, and commerce did not supply the losses it had sustained ; the lands were exhausted by taxes, and the channels of navigation did not assist the progress of agriculture. The loans of the state previously ruined the fortunes of the citizens by usurious profits, the forerunners of bankruptcy. Even those powers that were victorious, oppressed by the conquests they had made, and having acquired a greater extent of land than they could keep or cultivate, were involved in the ruin of their enemies. The neutral powers, who were desirous of enriching themselves in peace, in the midst of this commotion, were exposed, and tamely submitted, to insults more disgraceful than the defeats of an open war.

The spirit of discord had been transferred from the sovereigns to the people. The citizens of the several states took up arms reciprocally to plunder each other. Nothing was seen but merchantmen changed into privateers : those by whom they were commanded were not urged by necessity to follow this employment ; some of them had fortunes, and the others might have received advantageous salaries from all sides. An inordinate passion for plunder was the only stimulus they had to this depravity. When they met with a peaceable merchantman, they were seized with a ferocious joy, which manifested itself in the most lively

transports: they were cruel, and homicides. An enemy more fortunate, stronger, or bolder, might, in their turn, deprive them of their prey, their liberty, and their life. But the aspect of a danger so common did not diminish either their avarice or their rage. This species of frenzy was not new. It had been known in the most distant ages, and had been perpetuated from one century to another. Man, at all times, though not urged by the unconquerable stimulus of hunger, hath sought to devour man. The calamity, however, which we here deplore, had never arisen to that pitch at which we have seen it. The activity of piracy hath increased in proportion as the seas have furnished it with more means to satisfy its avidity and its turbulent spirit.

Will nations, then, never be convinced of the necessity of putting an end to these acts of barbarism? Would not a restraint which should check their progress prove a circumstance of evident utility? Wherefore must the productions of the two worlds be either swallowed up in the abyss of the ocean, together with the vessels which convey them; or become the prey of the vices and debauchery of a few vagabonds, destitute of morals and of principles? Will this infatuation continue much longer, or will the administrators of empires at length open their eyes to the light? Should they one day be made acquainted with their true interests, with the essential interests of the societies at the head of which they are placed, they will not limit their policy to the clearing of the seas from pirates, but they will extend it so far, as to leave a free intercourse to the connections subsisting between their respective subjects, during those murderous and destructive hostilities which frequently harass and ravage the globe.

They are fortunately past those deplorable times, when the nations fought for their mutual annihilation. The troubles which at present divide Europe have not so fatal an aim. It is seldom that any other object is proposed, than the reparation of some injustice, or the maintenance of a certain equilibrium between empires. The belligerent powers will undoubtedly endeavour to annoy and to weaken each other as much as possible: but if none of them could do more mischief than they suffered, would it not be generally useful to put a stop to these calamities? This is

what constantly happens, when war suspends the operations of commerce,

Then one state rejects the productions and the industry of the adverse state, which, in its turn, rejects her productions and her industry. This is, on both sides, a diminution of labour, of profit, and of enjoyments. The interference of neutral powers, in those circumstances, is not so favourable as we are perhaps accustomed to consider it. Beside that their agency must necessarily be very expensive, they endeavour to raise themselves upon the ruin of those whom they seem to serve. Whatever their soil and their manufactures can furnish is substituted, as much as possible, to the productions of the soil and manufactures of the armed powers, which frequently do not recover at the peace what the hostilities made them lose. It will therefore be always consistent with the interests of the nations which make war against each other, to continue, without restraint, the exchanges they carried on before their dissensions.

All truths hold by each other. Let this truth, the importance of which we have established, direct the conduct of governments; and we shall soon see those innumerable barriers, which, even in times of the most profound tranquillity, separate the nations, whatever may be the affinities which nature or chance hath created between them, will exist no more.

The most sanguinary disputes were formerly no more than transient explosions, after which, each people reposed upon their arms, either defeated or triumphant. Peace, at that time, was peace; but, at present, it is nothing more than a tacit war. Every state rejects foreign productions, either by prohibitions, or by restraints often equivalent to prohibitions. Every state refuses its own, upon such equitable terms which might make them be sought after, or extend their consumption. The desire of mutually annoying each other is extended from one pole to the other. In vain hath nature regulated, that, under her wise laws, every country should be opulent, powerful, and happy, from the wealth, the power, and the felicity, of the rest. They have, unanimously as it were, disturbed this plan of universal benevolence, to the detriment of them all. Their ambition hath led them to insulate themselves; and this solitary situation hath made them desirous of an exclusive prosperity. Evil

for evil hath then been returned. Artifices have been opposed to artifices, proscriptions to proscriptions, and fraud to fraud. Nations have become enervated, in attempting to enervate the rival powers; and it was impossible it should be otherwise. The connections of commerce are all very close. One of its branches cannot experience any opposition, without the others being sensible of it. Commerce connects people and fortunes together, and establishes the intercourse of exchanges. It is one entire whole, the several parts of which attract, support, and balance, each other. It resembles the human body, all the parts of which are affected, when one of them doth not fulfil the functions that were destined to it.

Would you wish to put an end to the calamities which ill contrived plans have brought upon the whole earth, you must pull down the fatal walls with which they have encompassed themselves. You must restore that happy fraternity which constituted the delight of the first ages. Let the people, in whatever country fate may have placed them, to whatever government they may be subject, whatever religion they may profess, communicate as freely with each other, as the inhabitants of a hamlet with those of a neighbouring one; with those of the most contiguous town; and with all those of the same empire; that is to say, free from duties, formalities, and predilections.

Then, but not before, the earth will be filled with productions, and those of an exquisite quality. The frenzy of impositions and prohibitions hath reduced each state to cultivate commodities, which its soil and its climate rejected, and which were never either of good quality, or plentiful. The labours will be directed to another channel. When the earth can satisfy its wants in a more pleasant way, and at a cheaper rate, it will turn all its activity to objects for which nature had destined it; and which being such as they should be, will find an advantageous mart in those places even where an enlightened system of economy shall have determined the people to reject them.

Then, but not before, all nations will attain to that degree of prosperity, to which they are allowed to aspire: they will enjoy both their own riches, and the riches of other nations. The people who had till then had some success in trade, have hitherto imagined that their neigh-

hours could only make their own trade flourish at the expense of theirs. This presumption had made them behold with an anxious and suspicious eye the efforts that were made to improve their situation; and had excited them to interrupt, by the manoeuvres of an active and unjust cupidity, labours the consequences of which they dreaded. They will alter their conduct, when they shall have understood, that the natural and moral order of things is subverted by the present state of them; that the idleness of one country is hurtful to all the rest, either because it condemns them to more labour, or because it deprives them of some enjoyments; that foreign industry, far from confining theirs, will extend it; that the more benefits shall be multiplied around them, the more easy it will be for them to extend their conveniences and their exchanges; that their harvests and their manufactures must necessarily fall to ruin, if the marts, and their returns, are to be deficient; that states, as well as individuals, have a visible interest, habitually, to sell at the highest price possible, and to purchase at the highest price possible; and that this double advantage can be found only in the greatest possible competition, and in the greatest affluence, between the sellers and the purchasers. This is the interest of every government, and it is therefore the interest of all of them.

Let it not be said, that, in the system of a general and unlimited liberty, some people would acquire a too determined ascendant over the rest. The new plans will not deprive any state of its soil or of its genius. Whatever advantages each may have had in times of prohibition, it will preserve under the guidance of better principle. Its utility will even increase considerably, because its neighbours, enjoying more wealth, will more and more extend its consumptions.

If there existed a country which might be allowed to have some dislike to the abolition of the prohibitive government, it undoubtedly would be that which improvident nature hath condemned to an eternal poverty. Accustomed to reject, by sumptuary laws, the delights of more fortunate countries, they might be apprehensive that a communication entirely free, with them, might subvert their maxims, corrupt their morals, and pave the way for their ruin. These alarms would be ill-founded. Except, per-

haps, a few moments of illusion, every nation would regulate their wants by their abilities.

Happy, then, and infinitely happy, will be that power, which shall be the first to disencumber itself of the restraints, the taxes, and the prohibitions, which in all parts oppress and stop the progress of commerce. Attracted by the liberty, the facility, the safety, and the multiplicity, of exchanges; the ships, the productions, the commodities, and the merchants, of all countries, will crowd into their ports. The causes of so splendid a prosperity will soon be understood; and the nations, renouncing their ancient errors and their destructive prejudices, will hasten to adopt principles so fertile in favourable events. The revolution will become general. Clouds will be dispelled in all parts; a serene sky will shine over the face of the whole globe, and nature will resume the reins of the world. Then, or never, will that universal peace arise, which a warlike but humane monarch did not think to be a chimerical idea. If so desirable and so little expected a benefit should not issue from this new order of things, from this great unfolding of reason, at least the general felicity of men will be established upon a more solid basis.

Agriculture. COMMERCE, which naturally arises from agriculture, returns to it by its bent and by its circulation. Thus it is that the rivers return to the sea, which has produced them, by the exhalation of its waters into vapours, and by the fall of those vapours into waters. The flow of gold brought by the circulation and consumption of the fruits of the earth, returns, at length into the fields, there to produce all the necessaries of life and the materials of commerce. If the lands be not cultivated, all commerce is precarious; because it is deprived of its original supplies, which are the productions of nature. Nations that are only maritime, or commercial, enjoy, it is true, the fruits of commerce; but the tree of it belongs to those people who cultivate it. Agriculture is therefore the first and real opulence of a state.

These benefits were not enjoyed in the infancy of the world. The first inhabitants of the globe relied only upon chance, and upon their dexterity, for procuring to themselves an uncertain subsistence. They wandered from one

region to another. Incessantly absorbed in the ideas of want or fear, they reciprocally fled from, or destroyed, each other. The earth was stirred up, and the miseries of a vagabond life were alleviated. In proportion as agriculture was extended, mankind were multiplied with the means of subsistence. Nations, and even great ones, were formed. Some of them disdained the source of their prosperity, and were punished for that senseless pride by invasions. Upon the ruins of vast monarchies, sunk in lethargy, by the neglect of useful labours, new states arose; which having, in their turn, contracted the habit of trusting the care of their subsistence to their slaves, were not able to resist the nations stimulated either by indigence or barbarism.

Such was the fate of Rome. Proud of the spoils of the universe, she held in contempt the rural occupations of her founders, and of her most illustrious citizens. Her country-places were filled with delightful retreats. She subsisted only upon foreign contributions. The people, corrupted by perpetual profusions, abandoned the labours of tillage. All the useful or honourable places were purchased with abundant distributions of corn. Hunger gave the law in the comitia. All the orders of the republic were no longer governed by any thing but hunger and amusement. Then the empire fell to ruin, destroyed rather by its internal vices, than by the barbarians who tore it to pieces.

The contempt which the Romans had for agriculture, in the intoxication of those conquests which had given them the whole world without their cultivating it, was perpetuated. It was adopted by those savage hordes, who, destroying by the sword, a power which was established by it, left to the vassals the clearing of the lands, of which they reserved to themselves the fruits and the property. Even in the age subsequent to the discovery of the East and West Indies, this truth was unattended to; whether in Europe the people were too much engaged in wars of ambition or religion to consider it; or whether the conquests made by Portugal and Spain beyond the seas, having brought us treasures without labour, we contented ourselves with enjoying them by encouraging luxury and the arts, before any method had been thought of to secure these riches.

But the time came, when plunder ceased, having no object on which it could be exercised. When the conquered

lands in the New World, after having been much contested for, were divided, it became necessary to cultivate them, and to support the colonists who settled there. As these were natives of Europe, they cultivated for that country such productions as it did not furnish, and required in return such provisions as custom had made natural to them. In proportion as the colonies were peopled, and as the number of sailors and manufacturers increased with the increase of productions, the lands must necessarily furnish a greater quantity of subsistence for the increase of population, and an augmentation of indigenous commodities, for foreign articles of exchange and consumption. The laborious employment of navigation, and the spoiling of provisions in the transport, causing a greater loss of materials and produce, it became necessary to cultivate the earth with the greatest care and assiduity, in order to render it more fruitful. The consumption of American commodities, far from lessening that of European productions, served only to increase and extend it upon all the seas, in all the ports, and in all the cities where commerce and industry prevailed. Thus the people who were the most commercial necessarily became, at the same time, the greatest promoters of agriculture.

England first conceived the idea of this new system. She established and encouraged it by honours and premiums proposed to the planters. A medal was stricken, and presented to the duke of Bedford, with the following inscription: *For having planted oak.* Triptolemus and Ceres were adorned in antiquity only from similar motives; and yet temples and altars are still erected to indolent monks. The God of nature will not suffer that mankind should perish. He hath implanted in all noble and generous minds, in the hearts of all people and of enlightened monarchs, this idea, that labour is the first duty of man, and that the most important of all labours is that of cultivating the land. The reward that attends agriculture, the satisfying of our wants, is the best encomium that can be made of it. "If I had a subject who could produce two blades of corn instead of one," said a monarch, "I should prefer him to all the men of political genius in the state." How much is it to be lamented, that such a king and such an opinion are merely the fiction of Swift's

brain? But a nation that can produce such writers must necessarily confirm the truth of this sublime idea; and accordingly we find that England doubled the produce of its cultivation.

Europe had this great example for more than half a century under her eyes, without its making a sufficient impression upon her to induce her to follow it. The French, who, under the administration of three cardinals, had scarce been allowed to turn their thoughts to public affairs, ventured at length, in 1750, to write on subjects of importance and general utility. The undertaking of an Universal dictionary of arts and sciences brought every great object to view, and exercised the thoughts of every man of genius and of knowledge. Montesquieu wrote the Spirit of laws, and the boundaries of genius were extended. Natural history was written by a French Pliny, who surpassed Greece and Rome in the knowledge and description of nature. This history, bold and sublime as its subject, warmed the imagination of every reader, and powerfully excited them to such inquiries as a nation cannot relinquish without returning into a state of barbarism. It was then that a great number of subjects became sensible of the real wants of their country. Government itself seemed to perceive that all kinds of riches originated from the earth. They granted some encouragement to agriculture, but without having the courage to remove the obstacles which prevented its improvement.

The French husbandman doth not yet enjoy the happiness of being taxed only in proportion to his abilities. Arbitrary imposts still molest and ruin him. Jealous or rapacious neighbours have it always in their power to exercise either their cupidity or their revenge against him. A barbarous collector, a haughty lord, an arrogant and authorised monopolist, a man raised to fortune, and who is a greater despot than all the rest, may humiliate, beat, and plunder him; they may deprive him, in a word, of all the rights of mankind, of property, of safety, and of liberty. Degraded by this kind of abject state, his clothes, his manners, his language, become an object of derision for all the other classes of society; and authority often gives a sanction by its conduct to this excess of extravagance.

I have heard that stupid and ferocious statesman, and the

indignation which he excited in me almost prompts me to name him, and to give up his memory to the execration of all sensible men; I have heard him say, that the labours of the field were so hard, that, if the cultivator were allowed to acquire some ease in his circumstances, he would forsake his plough, and leave the lands untill'd. His advice was therefore to perpetuate labour by misery, and to condemn to eternal indigence the man, without the sweat of whose brow he must have been starved to death. He ordered that the oxen should be fattened, while he curtailed the subsistence of the husbandman. He governed a province, and yet he did not conceive that it was the impossibility of acquiring a small degree of ease; and not the danger of fatigue, which disgusted the husbandman of his condition. He did not know that the state into which men are anxious to enter, is that which they hope to quit by the acquisition of riches; and that however hard may be the daily labours of agriculture, it will nevertheless find more votaries in proportion as the reward of its labours shall be more certain and more abundant. He had not noticed, that in the towns there were a multitude of employments, which, although they shortened the lives of those who were engaged in them, yet this did not deter others from following them. He did not know, that, in some countries of vast extent, there were miners who voluntarily devoted themselves to destruction in the bowels of the earth, and that even before they were thirty years of age, upon condition of reaping from this sacrifice clothes and provisions for their wives and children. It had never suggested itself to him, that, in all professions, that sort of ease in circumstances, which admits of calling in assistance, alleviates the fatigue of them; and that inhumanly to exclude the peasant from the class of proprietors, was to put a stop to the progress of the first of the arts, which could not become flourishing, as long as the person who till'd the earth was obliged to till it for another. This statesman had never compared with his own immense vineyards that small portion of vines belonging to his vine-dresser, nor known the difference there is between the soil cultivated for one's self and that which is cultivated for others.

Fortunately for France, all the agents of government have not had such destructive prejudices; and more fortun-

ately still, the obstacles which impeded the improvement of the lands and of agriculture in that country have been often overcome. Germany, and after that the northern climates, have been attracted by the taste of the age, which sensible men had turned towards these great objects. These vast regions have at length understood that the most extensive countries were of no value, if they were not rendered useful by a perseverance in labour; that the clearing of a soil extended it; and that territories the least favoured by nature might become fertile by prudent and skilful expences bestowed upon them. A multiplicity and a variety of productions have been the reward of so judicious a proceeding. Nations, who have been in want of the necessaries of life, have been enabled to furnish provisions even to the southern parts of Europe.

But how is it possible that men, situated upon so rich a territory, should have wanted foreign assistance to subsist? The great excellence of the territory hath been perhaps the true reason of this. In the countries which were not so favourably treated by nature, it hath been necessary that the cultivator should have considerable funds, that he should condemn himself to assiduous watchings, in order to acquire from the bosom of an ungrateful or rebellious soil harvests moderately plentiful. Under a more fortunate sky, it was only necessary for him, as it were, to scratch the earth; and this advantage hath plunged him into misery and indolence. The climate hath still increased his misfortunes, which have been completed by religious institutions.

The sabbath, considering it even only under a political point of view, is an admirable institution. It was proper to give a stated day of rest to mankind, that they might have time to recover themselves, to lift up their eyes to heaven, to enjoy life with reflection, to meditate upon past events, to reason upon present transactions, and in some measure to form plans for the future. But by multiplying these days of inactivity, hath not that which was established for the advantage of individuals and of societies, been converted into a calamity for them? Would not a soil, which should be ploughed three hundred days in the year by strong men and vigorous animals, yield double the produce of that which should only be worked one hundred and fifty days in the year? What strange insatiation!

Torrents of blood have been shed as infinite number of times to prevent the dismembering of a territory, or to increase its extent; and yet the powers intrusted with the maintenance and happiness of empires, have patiently suffered that a priest, sometimes even a foreign priest, should invade successively one third of this territory, by the proportional diminution of labour, which alone could fertilize it. This inconceivable disorder hath ceased in several states, but it continues in the south of Europe. This is one of the greatest obstacles to the increase of its subsistence and of its population. The importance of agriculture begins, however, to be perceived: even Spain hath exerted herself; and for want of inhabitants, who would employ themselves in the labours of the field, she hath at last invited foreigners to till her uncultivated provinces.

Notwithstanding this almost universal emulation, it must be acknowledged that agriculture hath not made the same progress as the other arts. Since the revival of letters, the genius of men hath measured the earth, calculated the motion of the stars, and weighed the air. It hath penetrated through the darkness which concealed from it the natural and moral system of the world. By investigating nature, it hath discovered an infinite number of secrets, with which all the sciences have enriched themselves. Its empire hath extended itself over a multitude of objects necessary to the happiness of mankind. In this ferment of men's minds, experimental philosophy, which had but very imperfectly enlightened ancient philosophy, hath too seldom turned its observations towards the important part of the vegetable system. The different qualities of the soil, the number of which is so various, are still unknown, as well as the kind of soil which is the best adapted to every production; the quantity and the quality of the seeds which it is proper to sow in them; the seasons most propitious for ploughing, sowing, and reaping, them; and the species of manure fit to increase their fertility. No better information is procured concerning the most advantageous manner of multiplying flocks, of breeding and of feeding them, and of improving their fleece. No greater light hath been thrown upon the cultivation of trees. We have scarce any but imperfect notions concerning all these articles of primary necessity, such as have been transmitted to us by a blind rout-

ing, or by practice followed with little reflection. Europe would be still less advanced in this knowledge, were it not for the observations of a few English writers, who have succeeded in eradicating some prejudices, and in introducing several excellent methods. This zeal for the first of arts hath been communicated to the cultivators of their nation. Fairchild, one of them, hath carried his enthusiasm so far, as to order that the dignity of his profession should be annually celebrated by a public discourse. His will was complied with for the first time in 1760, in St. Leonard's church in London; and this useful ceremony hath never been omitted since that period.

It is a fact somewhat remarkable, though it might naturally be expected, that men should have returned to the exercise of agriculture, the first of the arts, only after they had successively tried the rest. It is the common progression of the human mind not to regain the right path till after it hath exhausted itself in pursuing false tracks. It is always advancing; and as it relinquished agriculture to pursue commerce and the enjoyments of luxury, it soon traversed over the different arts of life, and returned at last to agriculture, which is the source and foundation of all the rest, and to which it devoted its whole attention, from the same motives of interest that had made it quit it before. Thus the eager and inquisitive man, who voluntarily banishes himself from his own country in his youth, wearied with his constant excursions, returns at last to live and die in his native land.

Every thing, indeed, depends upon, and arises from, the cultivation of land. It forms the internal strength of states, and occasions riches to circulate into them from without. Every power which comes from any other source is artificial and precarious, either considered in a natural or moral light. Industry and commerce, which do not directly affect the agriculture of a country, are in the power of foreign nations, who may either dispute these advantages through competition, or deprive the country of them through envy. This may be effected either by establishing the same branch of industry among themselves, or by suppressing the exportation of their own unwrought materials, or the exportation of those materials when manufactured. But a country well cultivated occasions an increase of pop-

pulation, and riches are the natural consequence of that increase. This is not the teeth, which the dragon sows to bring forth soldiers to destroy each other; it is the milk of Juno, which peoples the heavens with an innumerable multitude of stars.

The government, therefore, should rather be attentive to the support of the country places than of great cities. The first may be considered as parents and nurseries always fruitful, the others only as daughters which are often ungrateful and barren. The cities can scarce subsist but from the superfluous part of the population and produce of the countries. Even the fortified places and ports of trade, which seem to be connected with the whole world by their ships, which diffuse more riches than they possess, do not, however, attract all the treasures they dispense, but by means of the produce of the countries that surround them. The tree must, therefore, be watered at its root. The cities will only be flourishing in proportion as the fields are fruitful.

But this fertility depends still less upon the soil than upon the inhabitants. Some countries, though situated under a climate the most favourable to agriculture, produce less than others inferior to them in every respect, because the efforts of nature are impeded in a thousand ways by the form of their government. In all parts where the people are attached to the country by property, by the security of their funds and revenues, the lands will flourish; in all parts where privileges are not confined to the cities, and labour in the countries, every proprietor will be fond of the inheritance of his ancestors, will increase and embellish it by assiduous cultivation, and his children will be multiplied in proportion to his means, and these be increased in proportion to his children.

It is, therefore, the interest of government to favour the husbandman, in preference to all the indolent classes of society. Nobility is but an odious distinction, when it is not founded upon services of real and evident utility to the state; such as the defence of the nation against the encroachments of conquest, and against the enterprises of despotism. The nobles furnish only a precarious, and oftentimes fatal, assistance; when, after having led an effeminate and licentious life in the cities, they can only afford

a weak defence for their country upon her fleets and in her armies; and afterwards return to court, to solicit, as a reward for their baseness, places and honours, which are revoking and burdensome to the nation. The clergy are a set of men useless, at least, to the earth, even when they are employed in prayer. But when, with scandalous morals, they preach a doctrine which is rendered doubly incredible and impracticable from their ignorance and from their example; when, after having disgraced, discredited, and overturned, religion, by a variety of abuses, of sophisms, of injustices, and usurpations, they wish to support it by persecution; then this privileged, indolent, and turbulent, class of men, become the most dreadful enemies of the state and of the nation. The only good and respectable part of them that remains, is that portion of the clergy who are most despised and most burthened with duty, and who, being situated among the lower class of people in the country, labour, edify, advise, comfort, and relieve, a multitude of unhappy men.

The husbandmen deserve to be preferred by government even to the manufacturers, and the professors of either the mechanical or liberal arts. To encourage and to protect the arts of luxury, and at the same time neglect the cultivation of the land, that source of industry to which they owe their existence and support, is to forget the order of the several relations between nature and society. To favour the arts, and to neglect agriculture, is the same thing as to remove the basis of a pyramid, in order to finish the top. The mechanical arts engage a sufficient number of hands by the allurements of the riches they procure, by the comforts they supply the workmen with, by the ease, pleasures, and conveniencies, that arise in cities where the several branches of industry unite. It is the life of the husbandman that stands in need of encouragement for the hard labours it is exposed to, and of indemnification for the losses and vexations it sustains. The husbandman is placed at a distance from every object that can either excite his ambition or gratify his curiosity. He lives in a state of seclusion from the distinctions and pleasures of society. He cannot give his children a polite education, without sending them at a distance from him, nor place them in such a situation as may enable them to distinguish and advance them.

themselves by the fortune they may acquire. He does not enjoy the sacrifices he makes for them, while they are educated at a distance from him. In a word, he undergoes all the fatigues that are incident to man, without enjoying his pleasures, unless supported by the paternal care of government. Every thing is burthensome and humiliating to him, even the taxes, the very name of which sometimes makes his condition more wretched than any other.

Men are naturally attached to the liberal arts by the bent of their talents, which makes this attachment grow up into a kind of passion; and likewise by the consideration they reflect on those who distinguish themselves in the pursuit of them. It is not possible to admire the works of genius, without esteeming and caressing the persons endowed with that valuable gift of nature. But the man devoted to the labours of husbandry, if he cannot enjoy in quiet what he possesses, and what he gathers; if he be incapable of improving the benefits of his condition, because the sweets of it are taken from him; if the military service, if vassalage and taxes are to deprive him of his child, his cattle, and his corn, nothing remains for him but to imprecate both the sky and the land that torment him, and to abandon his fields and his country.

A wise government cannot, therefore, refuse to pay its principal attention to agriculture, without endangering its very existence: the most ready and effectual means of assisting it, is to favour the multiplication of every kind of production, by the most free and general circulation.

An unrestrained liberty in the exchange of commodities renders a people at the same time commercial and attentive to agriculture, it extends the views of the farmer towards trade, and those of the merchant towards cultivation. It connects them to each other by such relations as are regular and constant. All men belong equally to the villages and to the cities, and there is a reciprocal communication maintained between the provinces. The circulation of commodities brings on in reality the golden age, in which streams of milk and honey are said to have flowed through the plains. All the lands are cultivated; the meadows are favourable to tillage by the cattle they feed; the growth of corn promotes that of vines, by furnishing a constant

and certain subsistence to him who neither sows nor reaps, but plants, prunes, and gathers.

Let us now consider the effects of a contrary system, and attempt to regulate agriculture, and the circulation of its produce, by particular laws; and let us observe what calamities will ensue. Power will not only be desirous of observing and being informed of every action, but will even want to assume every important act to itself, in consequence of which nothing will succeed. Men will be led like their cattle, or transported like their corn; they will be collected and dispersed at the will of a tyrant, to be slaughtered in war, or perish upon fleets, or in different colonies. That which constitutes the life of a state will become its destruction. Neither the lands nor the people will prosper, and the states will tend quickly to their dissolution; that is, to that separation which is always preceded by the massacre of the people, as well as their tyrants. What will then become of manufactures.

AGRICULTURE gives birth to the arts, *Manufactures* when it is carried to that degree of plenty which gives men leisure to invent, and procure themselves the conveniences of life; and when it has occasioned a population sufficiently numerous to be employed in other labours beside those of the land, then a people must necessarily become either soldiers, navigators, or manufacturers. As soon as war has changed the rude and savage manners of a laborious people; as soon as it has nearly circumscribed the extent of their empire; those men who were before engaged in the exercise of arms must then apply themselves to the management of the oar, the ropes, the scissars, or the shuttle; in a word, of all the instruments of commerce and industry; for the land, which supported such a number of men without the assistance of their own labour, does not any more stand in need of it. As the arts ever have a country of their own, their peculiar place of refuge, where they are carried on and flourish in tranquillity, it is easier to repair thither in search of them, than to wait at home till they shall have grown up, and advanced with the tardy progression of ages, and the favour of chance, which presides over the discoveries of genius. Thus every nation of Europe that has had any industry, has borrowed the most consider-

able share of the arts from Asia. Their invention seems to have been coeval with mankind.

The beauty and fertility of those climates have always produced a most numerous race of people, as well as abundance of fruits of all kinds. Their laws and arts, the offspring of genius and tranquillity, have arisen from the stability of empires; and luxury, the source of every enjoyment that attends industry, has sprung out of the richness of the soil. India, China, Persia, and Egypt, were in possession not only of all the treasures of nature, but also of the most brilliant inventions of art. War in these countries hath often destroyed every monument of genius, but they rise again out of their own ruins, as well as mankind. Not unlike those laborious swarms we see perish in their hives by the wintry blast of the north, and which reproduce themselves in spring, retaining still the same love of toil and order, there are certain Asiatic nations which have still preserved the arts of luxury with the materials that supply them, notwithstanding the invasions and conquests of the Tartars.

It was in a country successively subdued by the Scythians, Romans, and Saracens, that the nations of Europe, which not even christianity nor time could civilize, recovered the arts and sciences, without endeavouring to discover them. The crusades exhausted the fanatic zeal of those who engaged in them, and changed their barbarous manners at Constantinople. It was by journeying to visit the tomb of their Saviour, who was born in a manger, and died on a cross, that they acquired a taste for magnificence, pomp, and wealth. By them the Asiatic grandeur was introduced into the courts of Europe. Italy, the seat from whence religion spread her empire over other countries, was the first to adopt a species of industry that was of benefit to her temples, the ceremonies of her worship, and those processions which serve to keep up devotion by means of the senses, when once it has engaged the heart. Christian Rome, after having borrowed her rites from the eastern nations, was still to draw from thence the wealth by which they are supported.

Venice, whose galleys were ranged under the banner of liberty, could not fail of being industrious. The people of Italy established manufactures and were a long time in pos-

session of all the arts, even when the conquest of the East and West Indies had caused the treasures of the whole world to circulate in Europe. Flanders derived her manual arts from Italy; England obtained those she established from Flanders; and France borrowed the general industry of all countries. Of the English she purchased her stocking-loom, which work ten times as fast as the needle. The number of hands unoccupied from the introduction of the loom, were employed in making of lace, which was taken from the Flemings. Paris surpassed Persia in her carpets, and Flanders in her tapestry, in [the elegance of her patterns, and the beauty of her dyes; and excelled Venice in the transparency and size of her mirrors. France learned to dispense with part of her silks she received from Italy; and with English broad cloths. Germany, together with her iron and copper mines, has always preserved the superiority she had acquired in melting, tempering, and working, up those metals. But the art of giving the polish and fashion to every article that can be concerned in the ornaments of luxury and the conveniencies of life, seems to belong peculiarly to the French; whether it be that, from the vanity of pleasing others, they find the means of succeeding by all the outward appearances of brilliant show; or that in reality grace and ease are the constant attendants of a people naturally lively and gay, and who by instinct are in possession of taste.

Every people given to agriculture ought to have arts to employ their materials, and should multiply their productions to maintain their artists. Were they acquainted only with the labours of the field, their industry must be confined in its cause, its means, and its effects. Having but few wants and desires, they would exert themselves but little; employ fewer hands, and work less time. Their cultivation would neither be extended nor improved. Should such a people be possessed of more arts than materials, they must be indebted to strangers, who would ruin their manufactures, by sinking the price of their articles of luxury, and raising the value of their subsistence. But when a people, engaged in agriculture, join industry to property, the culture of their produce to the art of working it up, they have then within themselves every thing necessary for their existence and preservation, every source of greatness and prof-

perity. Such a people is endowed with a power of accomplishing every thing they wish, and stimulated with a desire of acquiring every thing that is possible.

Nothing is more favourable to liberty than the arts; it may be said to be their element, and that they are, in their nature, citizens of the world. An able artist may work in every country, because he works for the world in general. Genius and abilities everywhere avoid slavery, while soldiers find it in all parts. When, through the want of toleration in the clergy, the protestants were driven out of France, they opened to themselves a refuge in every civilized state in Europe; but priests, banished from their own country, have found no asylum anywhere; not even in Italy, the parent of monachism and intolerance.

The arts multiply the means of acquiring riches, and contribute, by a greater distribution of wealth, to a more equitable repartition of property. Thus is prevented that excessive inequality among men, the unhappy consequence of oppression, tyranny, and lethargic state, of a whole people.

How many objects of instruction and admiration doth not the most enlightened man find in manufactures and workshops! To study the productions of nature is undoubtedly beautiful; but is it not more interesting to know the different means made use of by the arts, either to alleviate the misfortunes, or to increase the enjoyments, of life? Should we be in search of genius, let us go into the workshops, and there we shall find it under a thousand different forms. If one man alone had been the inventor of the manufacture for figured stuffs, he would have displayed more intelligence than Leibnitz or Newton; and I may venture to say, that there is no problem in the mathematical principles of the latter, more difficult to be solved, than that of weaving a thread by the assistance of a machine. Is it not a shameful thing to see the objects which surround us viewing themselves in a glass, while they are unacquainted with the manner in which glass is melted; or clothing themselves in velvet to keep out the cold, while they know not how it is manufactured? Let men who are well informed, go and assist with their knowledge the wretched artisan, condemned blindly to follow the routine he has been used to, and they may be certain of being indemnified by the secrets he will impart to

them. The torch of industry serves to enlighten at once a vast horizon. No art is single : the greater part of them have their forms, modes, instruments, and elements, that are peculiar to them. The mechanics themselves have contributed prodigiously to extend the study of mathematics. Every branch of the genealogical tree of science has unfolded itself with the progress of the arts, as well liberal as manual. Mines, mills, the manufacture and dying of cloth, have enlarged the sphere of philosophy and natural history. Luxury has given rise to the art of enjoyment, which is entirely dependent on the liberal arts. As soon as architecture admits of ornaments without, it brings with it decorations for the inside of our houses ; while sculpture and painting are at the same time employed in the embellishment and adorning of the edifice. The art of design is applied to our dress and furniture. The pencil, ever fertile in new designs, is varying without end its sketches and shades on our stuffs and our porcelain. The powers of genius are exerted in composing at leisure masterpieces of poetry and eloquence, or those happy systems of policy and philosophy, which restore to the people their natural rights, and to sovereigns all their glory, which consist in reigning over the heart and the mind, over the opinion and will, of their subjects, by the means of reason and equity.

Then it is that the arts produce that spirit of society which constitutes the happiness of civil life ; which gives relaxation to the more serious occupations, by entertainments, shows, concerts, conversations, in short, by every species of agreeable amusement. Ease gives to every virtuous enjoyment an air of liberty, which connects and mingles the several ranks of men. Employment adds a value or a charm to the pleasures that are its recompense. Every citizen depending upon the produce of his industry for subsistence, has leisure for all the agreeable or toilsome occupations of life, as well as that repose of mind which leads on to the sweets of sleep. Many, indeed, falls victims to avarice, but still less than to war or superstition, the continual scourges of an idle people.

After the cultivation of the land, the encouragement of the arts and sciences is the next object that deserves the attention of man. At present, both serve to constitute the strength of civilized governments. If the arts have tended

to weaken mankind, then the weaker people must have prevailed over the strong ; for the balance of Europe is in the hands of those nations which are in possession of the arts.

Since manufactures have prevailed in Europe, the human heart, as well as the mind, have changed their beat and disposition. The desire of wealth has arisen in all parts from the love of pleasure. We no longer see any people satisfied with being poor because poverty is no longer the bulwark of liberty. We are obliged, indeed, to confess, that the arts in this world supply the place of virtues. Industry may give birth to vices ; but it banishes, however, those of idleness, which are infinitely more dangerous. As information gradually dispels every species of fanaticism, while men are employed in the gratifications of luxury, they do not destroy one another through superstition. At least, human blood is never spilt without some appearance of interest ; and war, probably, destroys only those violent and turbulent men, who in every state are born to be enemies to, and disturbers of, all order, without any other talent, any other propensity, than that of doing mischief. The arts restrain that spirit of dissension, by subjecting man to stated and daily employments. They bestow on every rank of life the means and the hopes of enjoyment, and give even the meanest a kind of estimation and importance, by the advantage that results from them. A workman at forty has been of more real value to the state than a whole family of vassals who were employed in tillage under the old feudal system. An opulent manufacture brings more benefit into a village, than twenty castles of ancient barons, whether hunters or warriors, ever conferred on their province.

If it be a fact, that in the present state of things, the people who are the most industrious ought to be the most happy and the most powerful, either because in wars that are unavoidable they furnish of themselves, or purchase by their wealth, more soldiers, more ammunition, more forces, both for sea or land service ; or that having greater interest in maintaining peace, they avoid contests, or terminate them by negotiation ; or that, in case of a defeat, they the more readily repair their losses by the effect of labour ; or that they are blessed with a milder or more enlightened government, notwithstanding the means of corruption and slavery

that tyranny is supplied with, by the effeminacy which luxury produces; in a word, if the arts really civilize nations, a state ought to neglect no opportunity of making manufactures flourish.

These opportunities depend on the climate, which, as Polybius says, forms the character, complexion, and manners, of nations. The most temperate climate must necessarily be the most favourable to that kind of industry which requires less exertion. If the climate be too hot, it is inconsistent with the establishment of manufactures, which require the concurrence of several persons together to carry on the same work; and it excludes all those arts which employ furnaces or strong lights. If the climate prove too cold, it is not proper for those arts which can only be carried on in the open air. At too great or too small a distance from the equator, man is unfit for several labours, which seem peculiarly adapted to a mild temperature. In vain did Peter the Great search among the best regulated states for all such arts as were best calculated to civilize his people: during a period of fifty years, not one of these principles of civilization has been able to flourish among the frozen regions of Russia. All artists are strangers in that land; and if they endeavour to reside there, their talents and their works soon die with them. When Lewis XIV, in his old age (as if that were the time of life for proscriptions) persecuted the protestants, in vain did they introduce their arts and trades among the people who received them; they were no longer able to work in the same manner as they had done in France. Though they were equally active and laborious, the arts they had introduced were lost, or they declined, from not having the advantage of the same climate and heat to animate them.

To the favourable disposition of climate, for the encouragement of manufactures, should be added the advantage of the political situation of the state. When it is of such extent as to have nothing to fear or want in point of security; when it is in the neighbourhood of the sea for the landing of its materials, and the exportation of its manufactures; when it is situated between powers that has iron mines to employ its industry, and others that have mines of gold to reward it; when it has nations on each side with ports and roads open on every side; such a state will have all the ex-

ternal advantages necessary to excite a people to open a variety of manufactures.

But one advantage still more essential is fertility of soil. If cultivation should require too many hands, there will be a want of labourers, or the manufacturers will employ so many hands, that there will not be men enough to cultivate the fields; and this must occasion a dearth of provisions, which, while it raises the price of workmanship, will also diminish the number of trades.

Where fertility of soil is wanting, manufactures require, at least, as few men to be employed as possible. A nation that should expend much on its mere subsistence, would absorb the whole profits of its industry. When the gratifications of luxury are greater or more expensive than the means of supplying them, the source from which they are derived is lost, and they can no longer be supported. If the workman will feed and clothe himself like the manufacturer who employs him, the manufacture is soon ruined. The degree of frugality that republican nations adhere to from motives of virtue, the manufacturer ought to observe from views of parsimony. This may be the reason, perhaps, that the arts, even those of luxury, are more adapted to republics than monarchies; for, under monarchical institutions, poverty is not always the sharpest spur with the people to industry. Labour, proceeding from hunger, is narrow and confined, like the appetite it springs from; but the work that arises from ambition spreads and increases as naturally as the vice itself.

National character has considerable influence over the progress of the arts of luxury and ornament. Some people are fitted for invention by that levity which naturally inclines them to novelty. The same nation is fitted for the arts, by their vanity, which inclines them to the ornament of dress. Another nation, less lively, has less taste for trivial matters, and is not fond of changing fashions. Being of a more serious turn, these people are more inclined to indulge in excesses of the table, and in drinking, which relieves them from all anxiety and apprehension. Of these nations, the one must succeed better than its rival in the arts of decoration, and must have the preference over it among all the other nations which are fond of the same arts.

The advantages which manufactures derive from nature

are further retarded by the form of government. While industry is favourable to national liberty, that in return should assist industry. Exclusive privileges are enemies to commerce and the arts, which are to be encouraged only by competition. Even the rights of apprenticeship, and the value set on corporations, are a kind of monopoly. The state is prejudiced by that sort of privilege which favours incorporated trades; that is to say, petty communities are protected at the expence of the greater body. By taking from the lower class of the people the liberty of choosing the profession that suits them, every profession is filled with bad workmen. Such as require greater talents are exercised by those who are the most wealthy; the meaner, and less expensive, fall often to the share of men born to excel in some superior art. As both are engaged in a profession for which they have no taste, they neglect their work, and prejudice the art: the first, because they have no abilities; the latter, because they are convinced that their abilities are superior to it. But if we remove the impediment of corporate bodies, we shall produce a competition in the workmen, and consequently the work will increase, as well as be more perfect.

It may be a question, whether it be beneficial to collect manufactures in large towns, or to disperse them over the country. This point is determined by facts. The arts of primary necessity have remained where they were first produced, in those places which have furnished the materials for them. Forges are in the neighbourhood of the mine, and linen near the flax. But the complicated arts of industry and luxury cannot be carried on in the country. If we disperse over a large extent of territory all the arts which are combined in watch and clock-making, we shall ruin Geneva, with all the works that support it. If we disperse among the different provinces of France the fifty thousand workmen who are employed in the stuff manufactory of Lyons, we shall annihilate taste, which is kept up only by the competition of a great number of rivals, who are constantly employed in endeavouring to surpass each other. The perfection of stuffs requires their being made in a town, where fine dyes may at once be united with beautiful patterns, and the art of working up woollens and silks with that of making gold and silver lace. If there be wanting

eighteen hands to make a pin, through how many manual arts, and artificers, must a laced coat, or an embroidered waistcoat, pass? How shall we be able to find, amidst an interior central province, the immense apparatus of arts that contribute to the furnishing of a palace, or the entertainments of a court? Those arts, therefore, that are most simple and unconnected with others, must be confined to the country; and such cloths as are fit for the lower class of people must be made in the provinces. We must establish between the capital and the other towns a reciprocal dependence of wants and conveniences, of materials and works; but still nothing must be done by authority or compulsion; workmen must be left to act for themselves. Let there be freedom of traffic and freedom of industry, and manufactures will prosper, population will increase.

Population.

HAS the world been more peopled at one time than another? This is not to be ascertained from history, on account of the deficiency of historians in one half of the globe that has been inhabited, and because one half of what is related by historians is fabulous. Who has ever taken, or could at any time take, an account of the inhabitants of the earth? She was, it is said, more fruitful in earlier times. But when was the period of this golden age? Was it when a dry land arose from the bed of the sea, purged itself in the rays of the sun, and caused the slime to produce vegetables, animals, and human creatures? But the whole surface of the earth must alternately have been covered by the ocean. The earth has then always had, like the individuals of every species, an infant state, a state of weakness and sterility, before she arrived at the age of fertility. All countries have been for a long time buried under water, lying uncultivated beneath sands and morasses, wild and overgrown with bushes and forests, till the human species, being thrown by accident on these deserts and solitudes, has cleared, altered, and peopled the land. But as all the causes of population are subordinate to those natural laws which govern the universe, as well as to the influences of soil and atmosphere, which are subject to a number of calamities, it must ever have varied with those periods of nature that have been either adverse or favourable to the increase of mankind. However, as the lot

of every species seems in a manner to depend on its faculties, the history of the progress and improvement of human industry must therefore, in general, supply us with the history of the population of the earth. On this ground of calculation, it is, at least doubtful, whether the world was formerly better inhabited and more peopled than it is at present.

Let us leave Asia under the veil of that antiquity which reports it to us ever covered with innumerable nations, and swarms of people so prodigious, that (notwithstanding the fertility of a soil which stands in need but of one ray of the sun to enable it to produce all sorts of fruit) men did but just arise, and succeed one another with the utmost rapidity, and were destroyed either by famine, pestilence, or war. Let us consider with more attention the population of Europe, which seems to have taken the place of Asia, by conferring upon art all the powers of nature.

In order to determine whether our continent was, in former ages, more inhabited than at present, it would be necessary to know whether public security was better established at that time, whether the arts were in a more flourishing condition, and whether the land was better cultivated. This is what we must investigate.

First, in these distant periods, the political institutions were very defective. Those ill-regulated governments were agitated with continual factions. The civil wars which sprang from these divisions were frequent and cruel. It often happened that one half of the people were massacred by the other half. Those citizens who had escaped the sword of the conqueror took refuge upon an unfavourable territory. From that asylum they did every possible mischief to an implacable enemy, till a new revolution enabled them to take memorable and complete vengeance for the calamities which they had endured.

The arts had not more vigour than the laws. Commerce was so limited, as to be reduced to the exchange of a small number of productions peculiar to some territories and to some climates. The manufactures were so little varied, that both the sexes were equally obliged to clothe themselves with a woollen stuff, which even was but seldom dyed. All the branches of industry were so little advanced, that there did not exist a single city which was indebted to them

for its increase or its prosperity. This was the effect and the cause of the general contempt in which these several occupations were holden.

It was difficult for commodities to find a certain and advantageous vent, in regions where the arts were in a languid state. Accordingly, agriculture felt the effects of this want of consumption. It is a certain proof, that most of these fine countries remained untilld, because the climate was evidently more rude than it hath since been. If immense forests had not deprived the countries of the influence of the beneficent planet which animates every thing, would our ancestors have had more to suffer from the rigour of the season than ourselves?

These facts, which cannot reasonably be called in question, demonstrate that the number of men was then very much limited in Europe: and that, excepting one or two countries, which may have fallen off from their ancient population, all the rest had only a few inhabitants.

What were those multitudes of people which *Cæsar* reckoned in Gaul, but a set of savage nations, more formidable in name than number? Were all those Britons, who were subdued in their island by two Roman legions, much more numerous than the Corsicans at present? Must not the north have been still less peopled? Regions where the sun scarce appears above the horizon; where the course of the waters is suspended for eight months in the year; where heaps of snow cover, for the same space of time, a soil frequently barren; where trees are rooted up by the winds; where the corn, the plants, and the springs, every thing which contributes to the support of life, is in a state of annihilation; where the bodies of all men are afflicted with pain; where rest, more fatal than the most excessive fatigues, is followed by the most dreadful calamities; where the arms of children are stiffened, while they are stretching them up to their mothers; and where their tears are converted to icicles on their cheeks; where nature . . . Such regions could only have been inhabited at some late period, and then only by some unfortunate people, flying from slavery or tyranny. They have never multiplied under so intemperate a sky. Over the face of the whole globe, numerous societies have always left behind them some durable monuments or ruins, but in the north there are absolutely

no remains which bear the impression of human power or industry.

The conquest of the finest part of Europe, in the space of three or four centuries, by the inhabitants of the most northern nations, seems at first sight to argue against what we have been saying. But let us consider, that these were the people of a territory ten times as large, who possessed themselves of a country inhabited at present by three or four nations only; and that it was not owing to the number of her conquerors, but to the revolt of her subjects, that the Roman empire was destroyed and reduced to subjection. In this astonishing revolution, we may readily admit that the victorious nations did not amount to one twentieth part of those that were conquered; because the former made their attacks with half their numbers of effective men, and the latter employed no more than the hundredth part of their inhabitants in their defence. But a people, who engage entirely in their own defence and support, are more powerful than ten armies raised by kings and princes.

Besides, those long and bloody wars, with the accounts of which ancient history is replete, are destructive of that excessive population they seem to prove. If, on the one hand, the Romans endeavoured to supply the losses their armies sustained in consequence of the victories they obtained, that desire of conquest to which they were devoted, destroyed at least other nations; for as soon as the Romans had subdued any people, they incorporated them into their own armies, and exhausted their strength as much by recruits, as by the tribute they imposed upon them. It is well known with what rage wars were carried on by the ancients; that often in a siege, the whole town was laid in ashes; men, women, and children, perished in the flames, rather than fall under the dominion of the conqueror; that in assaults, every inhabitant was put to the sword; that in regular engagements, it was thought more desirable to die sword in hand, than to be led in triumph, and be condemned to perpetual slavery. Were not these barbarous customs of war injurious to population? If, as we must allow, some unhappy men were preserved to be the victims of slavery, this was but of little service to the increase of mankind, as it established in a state an extreme inequality

of conditions among beings by nature equal. If the division of societies into small colonies or states, were adapted to multiply families by the partition of lands; it likewise more frequently occasioned contests among the nations; and as these small states touched one another, as it were, in an infinite number of points, in order to defend them, every inhabitant was obliged to take up arms. Large bodies are not easily put into motion on account of their bulk; small ones are in perpetual motion, which entirely destroys them.

If war were destructive of population in ancient times, peace was not always able to promote and restore it. Formerly all nations were ruled by despotic or aristocratic power, and these two forms of government are by no means favourable to the increase of the human species. The free cities of Greece were subject to laws so complicated, that there were continual dissensions among the citizens. Even the inferior class of people, who had no right of voting, obtained a superiority in the public assemblies, where a man of talents, by the power of eloquence, might put so many men into commotion. Besides, in these states, population tended to be confined to the city, in conjunction with ambition, power, riches, and, in short, all the effects and springs of liberty. Not but that the lands under the democratical states must have been well cultivated and well peopled. But the democracies were few; and as they were all ambitious, and could only aggrandize themselves by war, if we except Athens, whose commerce indeed, was also owing to the superiority of its arms, the earth could not long flourish and increase in population. In a word, Greece and Italy were at least the only countries better peopled than they are at present.

Except in Greece, which repelled, restrained, and subdued Asia; in Carthage, which appeared for a moment on the borders of Africa, and soon declined to its former state; and in Rome, which brought into subjection and destroyed the known world; where do we find such a degree of population, as will bear any comparison with what a traveller meets with every day on every sea-coast; along all the great rivers, and on the roads leading to capital cities? What vast forests are turned to tillage? What harvests are waving in the place of reeds that covered marshy grounds?

What numbers of civilized people who subsist on dried fish, and salted provisions?

Notwithstanding this, there hath arisen, for some years past, an almost general exclamation respecting the depopulation of all states. We think we can discover the cause of these strange exclamations. Men pressing, as it were, one upon the other, have left behind them some regions less inhabited; and the different distribution of mankind hath been taken for a diminution of the human race.

During a long series of ages empires were divided into so many sovereignties, as there were private noblemen in them. Then these subjects, or the slaves of these petty despots, were fixed, and that for ever, upon the territory where they were born. At the abolition of the feudal system, when there remained no more than one master, one king, and one court, all men crowded to that spot, from whence favours, riches, and honour, flowed. Such was the origin of those proud capitals, where the people have been successively heaped one upon another, and which are gradually become, in a manner, the general assembly of each nation.

Other cities, less extensive, but still very considerable, have also been raised in each province, in proportion as the supreme authority hath been confirmed. They have been formed by the tribunals, public business, and the arts, and they have been constantly more and more increased, by the taste for the conveniencies and pleasures of society.

These new establishments could not be formed but at the expence of the country places. Accordingly, there are scarce any inhabitants remaining there, except such as were necessary for the tilling of the lands, and for the employments that are inseparable from it. The productions have not felt the effect of this revolution; they are even become more abundant, more varied, and more agreeable, because more of them have been sought after, and better paid; because the methods and the instruments have acquired a degree of simplicity and of improvement they had not formerly; and because the cultivators, encouraged in a variety of ways, have become more active and more intelligent.

In the police, in the morals, and in the politics, of the moderns, we may discern many causes of propagation that did not exist among the ancients; but, at the same time,

we observe likewise some impediments which may prevent or diminish among us that sort of progress, which, in our species, should be most conducive to its being raised to the greatest degree of perfection: for population will never be very considerable, unless men are more numerous and more happy.

Population depends, in a great measure, on the distribution of landed property. Families are multiplied in the same manner as possessions; and when these are too large, they are always injurious to population from their inordinate extent. A man of considerable property, working only for himself, sets apart one half of his lands for his income, and the other for his pleasures. All he appropriates to hunting, is a double loss in point of cultivation; for he breeds animals on the land that should be appropriated to men, instead of subsisting men on the land which is appropriated to animals. Wood is necessary in a country for edifices and fuel; but is there any occasion for so many avenues in a park, or for parterres and kitchen-gardens, of such extent as belong to a large estate? In this case, does luxury, which in its magnificence contributes to the support of the arts, prove as favourable to the increase of mankind as it might by employing the land to better purposes? Too many large estates, therefore, and too few small ones, this is the first impediment to population.

The next obstacle is the unalienable domains of the clergy. When so much property remains for ever in the same hands, how shall population flourish, while it entirely depends upon the improvement of lands by the increase of shares among different proprietors? What interest has the incumbent to increase the value of an estate he is not to transmit to any successor, to sow or plant for a posterity not derived from himself? Far from diminishing his income to improve his lands, will he not rather impair the estate, in order to increase the rents which he is to enjoy only for life?

The entails of estates in great families are not less prejudicial to the propagation of mankind. They lessen at once both the nobility and the other ranks of people. As the right of primogeniture among the great sacrifices the younger children to the interest of the elder branch, in the same manner entails destroy several families for the sake of

a single one. Almost all entailed estates are ill cultivated, on account of the negligence of a proprietor who is not attached to a possession he is not to dispose of, which has been ceded to him only with regret, and which is already given to his successors, whom he cannot consider as his heirs, because they are not named by him. The right of primogeniture and of entail is therefore a law, one may say, made on purpose to defeat the increase of population in any state.

From these obstacles to population, produced by the defect of legislation, there arises a third, which is the poverty of the people. Wherever the farmers have not the property of the ground-rent, their life is miserable, and their condition precarious. Not being certain of their subsistence, which depends on their health, having but small reliance on their strength, which is not at their own disposal, and weary of their existence, they are afraid of breeding a race of wretched beings. It is an error to imagine that plenty of children are produced in the country, where there die as many, if not more, than are born every year. The toil of the father and the milk of the mother are lost to them and their children; for they will never attain to the flower of their age, or to that period of maturity, which, by its services, will recompense all the pains that have been bestowed upon their education. With a small portion of land, the mother might bring up her child, and cultivate her own little garden, while the father, by his labour abroad, might add to the conveniencies of his family. These three beings, without property, languish upon the little that one of them gains, or the child perishes.

What a variety of evils arise from a faulty or defective legislation! Vices and calamities are infinite in their effects; they mutually assist each other in spreading general destruction, and arise from one another, till they are both exhausted. The indigence of the country produces an increase of troops, a burthen ruinous in its nature, destructive of men in time of war, and of land in time of peace. It is certain that the military destroy the fields, which they do not cultivate themselves; because every soldier deprives the state of a husbandman, and burthens it with an idle or useless consumer. He defends the country in time of peace, merely from a pernicious system, which, under the

pretext of defence, makes all nations aggressors. If all governments would, as they easily might, let those men, whom they devote to the army, be employed in the labours of husbandry, the number of husbandmen and artisans throughout Europe would in a short time be considerably increased. All the powers of human industry would be exerted in improving the advantages of nature, and in surmounting every obstacle to improvement; every thing would concur in promoting life, not in spreading destruction.

The deserts of Russia would be cleared, and the plains of Poland not laid waste. The vast dominions of the Turks would be cultivated, and the blessings of their prophet would be extended over an immense population. Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, would again become what they were in the times of the Phœnicians, in the days of their shepherd kings, and of the Jews, who enjoyed happiness and peace under their judges. The parched mountains of Sierra Morena would be rendered fertile, the heaths of Aquitaine would be cleared of insects, and be covered with people.

But general good is merely the delusive dream of benevolent men. This brings to my remembrance the virtuous prelate of Cambray, and the good abbé of St. Pierre. Their works are composed with a design to make deserts inhabited, not indeed with hermits, who fly from the vices and misfortunes of the world, but with happy families, who would proclaim the glory of God upon earth, as the stars declare it in the firmament. Their writings abound with social views and sentiments of humanity, and may be considered as truly inspired; for humanity is the gift of heaven. Kings will insure the attachment of their people, in proportion as they themselves are attached to such men.

It is scarce necessary to observe, that one of the means to favour population, is to suppress the celibacy of the regular and secular clergy. Monastic institutions have a reference to two eras remarkable in the history of the world. About the year 700 of Rome, Jesus Christ was the founder of a new religion in the east; and the subversion of paganism was soon attended with that of the Roman empire itself. Two or three hundred years after the death of Christ, Egypt and Palestine were filled with monks. About

the year 700 of the christian era, Mohammed appeared, and established a new religion in the east; and christianity was transferred to Europe, where it fixed. Three or four hundred years afterwards, there arose multitudes of religious orders. At the time of the birth of Christ, the books of David, and those of the Sybil, foretold the destruction of the world, a deluge, or rather an universal conflagration, and general judgment: and all people, oppressed by the dominion of the Romans, wished for and believed in a general dissolution. A thousand years after the christian era, the books of David, and those of the Sybil, still announced the last judgment: and several penitents, as ferocious and wild in their extravagant piety as in their vices, sold all their possessions to go to conquer and die upon the tomb of their Redeemer. The nations groaning under the tyranny of the feudal government, wished for, and still believed in, the end of the world.

While one part of the christian world, impressed with terror, went to perish in the crusades, another part were burying themselves in cloisters. This was the origin of the monastic life in Europe. Opinion gave rise to monks, and it will be the cause of their destruction. The estates they possessed they will leave behind them for the use and increase of society; and all those hours, that are lost in praying without devotion, will be consecrated to their primitive intention, which is labour. The clergy are to remember, that, in the sacred scriptures, God says to man, in a state of innocence, increase and multiply; to man, in a fallen state, till the earth, and work for thy subsistence. If the duties of the priesthood seem yet to allow the priest to encumber himself with the care of a family and an estate, the duties of society more strongly forbid celibacy. If the monks, in earlier times, cleared the deserts they inhabited, they now contribute to depopulate the towns where their number is very great: if the clergy has subsisted on the alms of the people, they in their turn reduce the people to beggary. Among the idle classes of society, the most prejudicial is that which, from its very principles, must tend to promote a general spirit of indolence among men; make them waste at the altar, as well as the work of the bee, as the salary of the workmen; which burns in day-time the candles that ought to be reserved for the night, and makes

men lose in the church that time they owe to the care of their families; which engages men to ask of heaven the subsistence that the ground only can give, or produce in return for their toil.

There is still another cause of the depopulation of some states, which is, that want of toleration which persecutes and proscribes every religion but that of the prince on the throne. This is a species of oppression and tyranny peculiar to modern politics, to extend its influence even over men's thoughts and consciences: a barbarous piety, which, for the sake of exterior forms of worship, extinguishes, in some degree, the very idea of the existence of God, by destroying multitudes of his worshippers: it is an impiety still more barbarous, that, on account of things so indifferent as religious ceremonies must appear, destroys the life of man, and impedes the population of states, which should be considered as points of the utmost importance. For neither the number nor the allegiance of subjects is increased by exacting oaths contrary to conscience, by forcing into secret perjury those who are engaged in the marriage ties, or in the different professions of a citizen. Unity in religion is proper only when it is naturally established by conviction. When once that is at an end, a general liberty, if granted, would be the means of restoring tranquillity and peace of mind. When no distinction is made, but this liberty is fully and equally extended to every citizen, it can never disturb the peace of families.

Next to the celibacy of the clergy and of the military, the former of which arises from profession, the latter from custom, there is a third, derived from convenience, and introduced by luxury: I mean that of life annuitants. Here we may admire the chain of causes. At the same time that commerce favours population by the means of industry both by land and sea, by all the objects and operations of navigation, and by the several arts of cultivation and manufactures, it also decreases it by reason of all those vices which luxury introduces. When riches have gained a general ascendancy over the minds of men, then opinions and manners alter by the intermixture of ranks. The arts and the talents of pleasing corrupt society while they polish it. When the intercourse between the sexes become frequent, they mutually seduce each other, and the weaker induce

the stronger to adopt the frivolous turn for dress and amusement. The women became children, and the men effeminate. Entertainments are the sole topic of their conversation, and the object of their occupation. The manly and robust exercises, by which the youth were trained up to discipline, and prepared for the most important and dangerous professions, give place to the love of public shows, where every passion that can render a nation effeminate is caught, as long as there is no appearance of a patriotic spirit among them. Indolence prevails among all persons of easy circumstances, and labour diminishes among that class of men destined to be employed in it. The variety of arts multiplies fashions, and these increase our expences; articles of luxury become necessary; what is superfluous is looked upon as needful; and people in general are better dressed, but do not live so well; and purchase cloths at the expence of the necessaries of life. The lower class of men become debauched before they are sensible of the passion of love; and, marrying later, have fewer or weaker children. The tradesman seeks a fortune, not a wife; and he prematurely loses both the one and the other, in the excesses of libertinism. The rich, whether married or not, are continually seducing women of every rank, or debauching girls of low condition. The difficulty of supporting the charges of marriage, and the readiness of finding the joys of without bearing any of its disagreeable inconveniences, tends to increase the number of unmarried people in every class of life. The man who renounces the hope of being the father of a family, consumes his patrimony, and in concert with the state, which increases his income, by borrowing money from him at a ruinous interest; he lavishes upon one generation the support of many; he extinguishes his own posterity, as well as that of the women by whom he is rewarded, and that of the girls who are paid by him. Every kind of prostitution prevails at the same time. Honour and duty are forfeited in every rank; the ruin of the women is but the forerunner of that of the men.

The nation that is inclined to gallantry, or rather to libertinism, soon loses its power and credit in other countries, and is ruined at home. There is no longer any nobility, no longer any body of men, to defend their own or the people's rights; for everywhere division and self-int-

the liberty of the state was oppressed by the ruler of it; and in the latter, by strangers. It has, therefore, been found necessary, to have recourse to the contributions of the citizens.

These funds were in early times not considerable. The stipends then allowed were merely an indemnification to those whom public affairs prevented from attending to those employments that were necessary for their subsistence. Their reward arose from that pleasing sensation which we experience from an internal consciousness of our own virtue, and from the view of the homage paid to it by other men. This moral wealth was the greatest treasure of rising societies; a kind of coin which it was equally the interest of government and of morality not to diminish the value of.

Honour held the place of taxes no less in the flourishing periods of Greece, than in the infant state of societies. The patriot, who served his country, did not think he had any right to destroy it. The impost laid by Aristides on all Greece, for the support of the war against Persia, was so moderate, that those who were to contribute of themselves, called it *the happy fortune of Greece!* What times were these, and what a country, in which taxes made the happiness of the people!

The Romans acquired power and empire almost without any assistance from the public treasury. The love of wealth would have diverted them from the conquest of the world. The public service was attended to without any views of interest, even after their manners had been corrupted.

Under the feudal government there were no taxes; for on what could they have been levied? The man and the land were both the property of the lord. It was both a real and a personal servitude.

When knowledge began to diffuse its light over Europe, the nations turned their thoughts towards their own security. They voluntarily furnished contributions to repress foreign and domestic enemies. But those tributes were moderate, because princes were not yet absolute enough to divert them to purposes of their own caprices, or to the advantage of their own ambition.

The New World was discovered, and the passion for conquest engaged every nation. That spirit of aggrandize-

ment was inconsistent with the slowness with which affairs are managed in popular assemblies; and sovereigns succeeded, without much difficulty, in appropriating to themselves greater rights than they had ever before enjoyed. The imposition of taxes was the most important of their usurpations; and it is that, the consequences of which have been the most pernicious.

Princes have even ventured to render the marks of servitude apparent upon all their subjects, by levying a poll-tax. Independent of the humiliation it is attended with, can any thing be more arbitrary than such a tax?

Is the tax to be levied upon voluntary information? But this would require between the monarch and his subjects an attachment to each other arising from a principle of duty, which should unite them by a mutual love of the general good; or, at least, a regard to public welfare, to inspire the one with confidence in the other, by a sincere and reciprocal communication of their intelligence and of their sentiments. Even then, upon what is this conscientious principle to be founded, which is to serve as an instructor, a guide, and a check, in the affairs of government?

Is the sanctuary of families, or the closet of the citizen, to be invaded, in order to gain by surprise, and bring to light, what he does not choose to reveal, what it is often of importance to him not to discover? What an inquisition is this! What an injurious violence! Though we should even become acquainted with the resources and means of subsistence of every individual, do they not vary from one year to another with the uncertain and precarious productions of industry? Are they not lessened by the increase of children, by the decay of strength through sickness, age, and laborious occupations? The very faculties of the human species, which are useful and employed in laborious occupations, do they not change with those vicissitudes occasioned by time in every thing that depends on nature and fortune? The personal tax is a vexation then to the individual, without being a general benefit. A poll-tax is a sort of slavery, oppressive to the man, without being profitable to the state.

After princes had imposed this tax, which is a mark of despotism, or which leads to it sooner or later, imposts were then laid upon articles of consumption. Sovereigns have affected to consider this new tribute as in some measure es-

luntary, because it rises in proportion to the expences of the subject, which he is at liberty to increase or diminish according to his abilities, or his propensities, which are for the most part factitious.

But if taxation affects the commodities which are of immediate necessity, it must be considered as an act of the greatest cruelty. Previous to all the laws of society, man had a right to subsist. And is he to lose that right by the establishment of laws? To sell the produce of the earth to the people at a high price, is in reality to deprive them of it: to wrest from them by a tax the natural means of preserving life, is, in fact, to affect the very principle of their existence. By extorting the subsistence of the needy, the state takes from him his strength with his food. It reduces the poor man to a state of beggary, and the labouring man to that of idleness: it makes the unfortunate man become a rogue; that is, it is the cause of bringing the man who is ready to starve to an untimely end, from the extreme distress to which he is reduced.

If the imposts affect commodities less necessary, how many hands, lost to tillage and the arts, are employed, not in guarding the bulwarks of the empire, but in crowding the kingdom with an infinite number of useless barriers; in embarrassing the gates of towns; infesting the highways and roads of commerce; and searching into cellars, granaries, and storehouses! What a state of war between prince and people, between subject and subject! How many prisons, galleys, and gibbets, prepared for a number of unhappy persons who have been urged on to fraudulent practices, to smuggling, and even to piracy, by the iniquity of the revenue laws!

The avidity of sovereigns has extended itself from the articles of consumption to those of traffic carried on from one state to another. Insatiable tyrants! will ye never be sensible, that, if ye lay duties on what ye offer to the stranger, he will buy at a cheaper rate, he will give only the price demanded by other states? if even your own subjects were the sole proprietors of that produce you have taxed, they still would never be able to make other nations submit to such exactions; for in that case the demand would be for a less quantity, and the overplus would oblige them to lower the price, in order to find a sale for it.

The duty on merchandize, which one state receives from another, is not less unreasonable. The price of the goods being regulated by the competition of other countries, the duties will be paid by the subjects of that state which buys commodities for its neighbours. Possibly, the increase in the price of foreign produce may diminish the consumption of it. But if a less quantity of merchandize be sold to any country, a less quantity will be purchased of it. The profits of trade are to be estimated in proportion to the quantity of merchandize sold and bought. Commerce is in fact nothing more than the exchange of the value of one commodity for that of another. It is not possible then to oppose the course of these exchanges, without lowering the value of the productions that are sold, by restraining the sale of them.

Whether, therefore, duties be laid on our own or on foreign merchandize, the industry of the subject will necessarily suffer by it. The means of payment will be fewer, and there will be less raw materials to work up. The greater diminution there is in the annual produce, the greater also will be the decrease of labour. Then all the laws that can be made against beggars will be ineffectual, for man must live on what is given him, if he cannot live by what he earns.

But what then is the mode of taxation the most proper to conciliate the public interest with the rights of individuals? It is the land-tax. An impost is, with respect to the person upon whom it is charged, an annual expence. It can only, therefore, be assessed on an annual revenue; for nothing but an annual revenue can discharge an annual expence. Now there never can be any annual revenue, except that of the land. It is land only which returns yearly what has been bestowed upon it, with an additional profit that may be disposed of. It is but within these few years that we have begun to be sensible of this important truth. Some men of abilities will one day be able to demonstrate the evidence of it: and that government which first makes this the foundation of its system will necessarily be raised to a degree of prosperity unknown to all nations and all ages.

Perhaps there is no state in Europe at present whose situation admits of so great a change. The taxes are everywhere so heavy, the expences so multiplied, the wants so

urgent, the treasury of the state in general so much indebted, that a sudden change in the mode of raising the public revenues would infallibly alter the confidence and disturb the peace of the subject. But an enlightened and provident policy will tend, by slow and gradual steps, towards so salutary an end. With courage and prudence it will remove every obstacle that prejudice, ignorance, and private interest, might have to oppose to a system of administration, the advantages of which appear to us beyond all calculation.

In order that nothing may lessen the benefits of this fortunate innovation, it will be necessary that all lands without distinction should be subjected to taxation. The public weal is a treasure in common, wherein every individual should deposit his tribute, his service, and his abilities. Names and titles will never change the nature of men and their possessions. It would be the utmost meanness and folly to avail ourselves of distinctions received from our ancestors, in order to withdraw ourselves from the burthens of society. Every mark of distinction that is not of general utility should be considered as injurious: it can only be equitable, when it is founded on a formal engagement of devoting our lives and fortunes in a more particular manner to the service of our country.

If in our days the tax were laid for the first time upon the land, would it not necessarily be supposed that the contribution should be proportioned to the extent and value of the estates? Would any one venture to allege his employments, his services, his dignities, in order to screen himself from the tributes required for the public service? What connection have taxes with ranks, titles, and conditions? They relate only to the revenue: and this belongs to the state, as soon as it becomes necessary for the public defence.

The manner in which the tax ought to be laid upon the lands is more difficult to ascertain. Some writers have imagined, that ecclesiastical tithes, unfortunately levied in the greatest part of Europe, would be a proper mode to be adopted. In that system, say they, there could be no fraud nor mistake. According as circumstances should require more efforts on the part of the people, the treasury would take a fourth, a fifth, a sixth part of the productions at

the time of the harvest; and every thing would be settled without constraint, without deceit, without mistrust, and without oppression.

But in this mode of levying how will the tax be collected, for objects so multiplied, so variable, and so little known? Would not the form of administration require enormous expences? Would not the farming of the tax give occasion to profits too considerable? If this arrangement should therefore appear most fatal to citizens, would it not be most fatal to government? How can any one possibly doubt, that the interest of the individual is the same as that of the society? Can any one be still ignorant of the close connection there is between the sovereign who asks and the subjects who grant?

Besides, this impost, apparently so equal, would in fact be the most disproportioned of all which ignorance hath ever suggested. While one contributor should be required to give up only the fourth of his revenue, one half, and sometimes more, would be taken from others, who, in order to obtain the same quantity of productions, will have been obliged, by the nature of an ungrateful soil, or by the difficulty of working it, to support expences infinitely more considerable.

These inconveniences have occasioned an idea to be rejected, which has been proposed or supported by men little versed in political economy, but disgusted, with reason, at the arbitrary manner in which they saw the lands taxed. Suppose the extent of the domain be admitted as a rule, yet it must be considered that there are some lands which can pay a great deal, others which can pay little, and some, even, which can pay nothing, because the profits remaining, after all the expences, are scarce sufficient to determine the most intelligent man to cultivate them. If an exact state of the leases be demanded, will not the farmers and proprietors act in concert to deceive the government and what means are there to discover a fraud, planned with consummate art. If you will allow men to give in the account of their own estates, for one of these declarations that shall be honest, will there not be a hundred false ones? and will not the citizen of strict probity be the victim of him who is destitute of principles. In the mode of taking an estimation of the value of the lands, will not the agent

of the treasury suffer himself to be suborned by contributors whose interest it is to bribe him. Suppose the care of making the repartitions be left to the inhabitants of each district, it is undoubtedly the most equitable rule, the most conformable to the rights of nature and property; and yet it must necessarily produce so many cabals, altercations, and animosities, so violent a collision between the passions, which will interfere with each other, that it cannot be productive of that system of equity which might ensure the public happiness.

A register book, which would cautiously measure the lands, which would appreciate, with equity, their value, would alone be capable of effecting this fortunate revolution. This principle, so simple and so evident, hath been rarely applied, and then but imperfectly. It is to be hoped that this fine institution, though warmly opposed, by authority and by corruption, will be improved in those states where it has been adopted, and that it will be introduced in the empires where it doth not yet exist. The monarch who shall signalize his reign by this great benefit, will be blessed during his life, his memory will be dear to posterity, and his felicity will be extended beyond ages, if, as it cannot be doubted, there exists a God, the remunerator of good actions.

But let not government, under whatever form it may have been established, or still subsists, ever carry the measure of imposts to excess. It is said, that in their origin they rendered men more active, more sober, and more intelligent; and that they have thus contributed to the prosperity of empires. This opinion is not destitute of probability; but it is still more certain, that, when the taxes have been extended beyond the proper limits, they have stopped the labours, extinguished industry, and produced discouragement.

Though man hath been condemned by nature to perpetual watchings, in order to secure a subsistence, this urgent care hath not exerted all his faculties. His desires have been extended much beyond this; and the more numerous are the objects which have entered into his plan of happiness, the more repeated have been his efforts to attain them. If he hath been reduced, by tyranny, to expect nothing more from obstinate labour than articles of primary necessity, his activity hath been diminished; he hath himself contracted the sphere of his wants. Troubled, soured, and

exhausted by the oppressive spirit of the treasury, he hath either languished by his wretched fire-side, or hath quitted his country in search of a less unfortunate destiny, or hath led a wandering and vagabond life over desolated provinces. Most societies have, at different periods, suffered these calamities, and exhibited this hideous spectacle.

Accordingly, it is an error, and a very great one, to judge of the power of empires by the revenue of the sovereign. This basis of calculation would be the best that could be established, if the tributes were proportioned to the abilities of the citizens; but when the republic is oppressed by the weight or the variety of the imposts, these riches, far from being a sign of national prosperity, are a mark of decay. The people, unable to furnish any extraordinary assistance to the mother-country, when threatened or invaded, yield to a foreign yoke, and submit to shameful and ruinous laws. The catastrophe is hastened, when the treasury has recourse to the farming of the revenue, in order to collect the taxes.

The contribution of the citizens towards the republic treasury is a tribute: they should present it themselves to the sovereign; who, on his part, ought prudently to direct the employment of it. Every intermediate agent destroys these connections, which cannot be too nearly united. His influence becomes an unavoidable source of division and ravage. It is under this odious aspect that the farmers of the taxes have always been considered.

The farmers of the revenue contrive the taxes; and it is their business to multiply them. They envelope them in obscurity, in order to give them the degree of extension most suitable to themselves. Their interests are supported by judges chosen by themselves. They bribe every access to the throne; and they cause at pleasure their zeal to be extolled, or the people to be calumniated, who are dissatisfied, with reason, at their vexations. By those vile artifices they plunge the province into the lowest degree of misery, while their own coffers regurgitate with riches. Then it is that laws, manners, honour, and the little remains of the blood of the nation, are sold to them at the vilest price. The contractor enjoys, without shame or remorse, these infamous and criminal advantages, till he hath destroyed the state, the prince, and himself.

Free nations have seldom experienced this terrible destiny. Humane and considerate principles have made them prefer an administration almost always of a paternal kind, to receive the contributions of the citizens. It is in absolute governments that the tyrannical custom of farming out the revenue is peculiarly adopted. Government have sometimes been alarmed at the ravages occasioned by this practice; but timid, ignorant, or indolent, administrators, have apprehended, that in the occasion in which things were, a total subversion would be the consequence of the least change. Wherefore, then, should not the time of the disease be that of the remedy? then it is that the minds of men are better disposed to a change, that opposition is less violent, and that the revolution is more easily accomplished.

It is not, however, sufficient that the impost should be levied with equity, and that it should be collected with moderation; it is further necessary that it should be proportioned to the wants of government, which are not always the same. War hath ever required in all countries, and in every age, more considerable expences than peace. The ancients made a provision for them by their economy in times of tranquillity. Since the advantages of circulation and the principles of industry have been better understood, the method of laying up specie for this purpose has been proscribed, and that of imposing extraordinary taxes has been, with reason, preferred. Every state that should prohibit them would find itself obliged, in order to protect its fall, to have recourse to the methods made use of at Constantinople. The sultan, who can do every thing but augment his revenues, is constrained to give up the empire to the extortions of his delegates, that he may afterwards deprive them of what they have plundered from his subjects.

That taxes may not be exorbitant, they should be ordered, regulated, and administered by the representatives of the people. The impost has ever depended on, and must be proportioned to, the property possessed. He who is not master of the produce, is not master of the field. Tributes, therefore, among all nations have always been first imposed upon proprietors only; whether the lands were divided among the conquerors, or the clergy shared them

with the nobles ; or whether they passed, by means of commerce and industry, into the hands of the generality of the citizens. Everywhere, those who were in possession of them had reserved to themselves the natural, unalienable, and sacred, right of not being taxed without their own consent. If we do not admit this principle, there is no longer any monarchy or any nation ; there is nothing remaining but a despotic master and a herd of slaves.

Ye people, whose kings command every thing at pleasure, read over again the history of your own country. You will see that your ancestors assembled themselves, and deliberated, whenever a subsidy was in agitation: If this custom be neglected, the right is not lost ; it is recorded in heaven, which has given the earth to mankind to possess : it is written on the field you have taken the pains to inclose, in order to secure to yourselves the enjoyment of it : it is written in your hearts, where the Divinity has impressed the love of liberty. Man, whose head is raised towards heaven, was not made in the image of his Creator to bow before man. No one is greater than another, but by the choice and consent of all. Ye courtiers, your greatness consists in your lands, and is not to be found in your attendance on your master. Be less ambitious, and ye will be richer. Do justice to your vassals, and ye will improve your fortunes by increasing the general happiness. What advantage can ye propose to yourselves by raising the edifice of despotism upon the ruins of every kind of liberty, virtue, sentiment, and property ? Consider that this power will crush you all. Around this formidable colossus ye are no more than figures of bronze, representing the nations chained at the feet of a statue.

If the right of imposing taxes be in the prince alone, though it may not be for his interest to burthen and oppress his people, yet they will be burthened and oppressed. The caprices, profusions, and encroachments, of the sovereign, will no longer know any bounds when they meet with no obstacles. A false and cruel system of politics will soon persuade him, that rich subjects will always become insolent ; that they must be distressed, in order to be reduced to subjection ; and that poverty is the firmest rampart of the throne. He will proceed so far as to believe that every thing is at his disposal ; that nothing belongs to his

slaves; and that he does them a favour in leaving them any thing.

The government will appropriate to itself all the means and resources of industry; and will lay such restraints on the exports and imports of every article of trade, as will entirely absorb the profits arising from it. Commerce will only be circulated by the interference and for the benefit of the treasury. Cultivation will be neglected by mercenaries who can have no hopes of acquiring property. The nobility will serve in the army only for pay. The magistrate will give judgment only for the sake of his fees and his salary. Merchants will keep their fortunes concealed, in order that they may convey them out of a land where there is no spirit of patriotism, nor any security left. The nation, then losing all its importance, will conceive an indifference for its kings; will see its enemies only in those who are its masters; will be induced to hope that a change of slavery will tend to alleviate the yoke of it; will expect its deliverance from a revolution, and the restoration of its tranquillity from an entire overthrow of the state.

"This description is dreadful," said a vizier to me, for there are viziers everywhere. "I am concerned at it. But without contribution, how can I maintain that strength of the state, the necessity and advantage of which you yourself acknowledge? This strength should be permanent, and always equal; otherwise there would be no more security for your persons, your property, or your industry. Happiness undefended is no more than a chimera. My expences are independent of the variety of seasons, of the inclemency of the elements, and of all accidents. It is therefore necessary that they should be supplied by you, although a pestilence should have destroyed your cattle, though insects should have devoured your vines, and though the hail should have rooted up your harvests. You must pay, or I will turn against you that strength of the state, which hath been created for your safety, and which it is your business to maintain."

This oppressive system concerned only the proprietors of lands. The vizier soon informed me of the means which he employed to render the other members of the confederacy subservient to the treasury.

" It is chiefly in the cities that the mechanical and liberal arts, of utility or ornament of necessity or fancy, are concentrated, or at least their activity, their display, or their improvement. There it is that the rich, and consequently indolent, citizens, attracted or fixed by the charms of society, endeavour to elude the wearisomeness of life by factitious wants. There it is, that, in order to gratify them, they employ the poor, or which is the same thing, the industrious man; who, in his turn, in order to satisfy the wants of primary necessity, which are for a long time the only wants with which he is tormented, endeavours to multiply the factitious wants of the rich man: from whence arises between the one and the other a mutual dependence, founded upon their respective interests; for the industrious man wishes to labour, while the rich man wishes to enjoy. If, therefore, I can tax the necessary articles of all the inhabitants of cities, whether industrious or idle, that is to say, if I can raise the price, for the state, of all the commodities and merchandize which are consumed there, by the wants of all the individuals; I shall then have taxed all the species of industry, and I shall have brought them to the condition of the industrious husbandman. I shall have done still more; and especially, let not this circumstance escape your notice, I shall have made the rich pay for the poor, because the latter will not fail to raise the price of his productions, in proportion to the multiplication of his wants."

I conjure thee, vizier, to spare at least, the air, the water, the fire, and even the corn, which is not less than those three elements, the sacred right of every man, without exception. Deprived of light, no one can either live or act, and without life or action there can be no industry.

" I will think of it. But, attend to me, in all the different plans, by which I have comprehended all the other objects of necessity, especially in the cities. In the first place, being master of the frontiers of the empire, I suffer nothing to come from foreigners, nor any thing to be conveyed to them, unless they pay in proportion to the number, weight, and value, of the thing sent. By this mode, he who hath manufactured, or who exports, yields to me a part of his profits; and he who receives or con-

"Iumes, gives me something above what belongs to the merchant or to the manufacturer."

I understand, vizier; but by interfering thus between the seller and the purchaser, between the manufacturer, the merchant, and the consumer, without being called upon, and without your interference being profitable to them; since, on the contrary, you keep it up to their detriment, doth it not happen, that on their parts they endeavour, by deceiving thee some how or other, to diminish thy share, or even to frustrate thee of it?

"Undoubtedly? but of what use would the strength of the state be to me then, if I did not employ it in finding out the fraud, in guarding against it, or in punishing it? If they endeavour to withhold or to diminish my share, I take the whole; and even sometimes proceed a little further."

I comprehend you: thus it is that wars and exactions are still maintained on the frontiers, and on the borders of the provinces; and that, in order to press upon that fortunate industry, which is the tie of the most distant nations, and of the people the most separated by their manners and by their religion.

"I am sorry for it. But every thing must be sacrificed to the strength of the state, to that bulwark which is raised against the jealousy and rapaciousness of neighbouring powers. The interest of particular individuals doth not always agree with that of the greater number. One effect of the proceeding you complain of is, to preferre to you commodities and productions, which personal advantage would deprive you of by exporting them to foreign countries; and I prohibit the importation of foreign merchandize, which, by the superabundance they would occasion, when united to yours, would lower the price of the latter."

I thank thee, vizier; but is it necessary that thou shouldst have troops? Those troops are very inconvenient. And couldst thou not serve me without a military parade?

"If you perpetually interrupt me, you will lose the thread of my subtle and marvellous operations. After having laid a tax on merchandize, on its entrance, and on its going out of the empire, on its passage from one province to the other, I follow the track of the traveller, who goes through my district on account of his affairs,

“ or through motives of curiosity. I follow the peasant
“ who carries to town the produce of the fields, or of his
“ farm-yard; and when thirst drives him into a public
“ house, by means of an association with the mas-
“ ter. . . .”

What, vizier! an inn-keeper is your associate?

“ Certainly. Is there any thing despicable, when the
“ maintenance of the strength of the state, and consequent-
“ ly the wealth of the treasury, is concerned? by means
“ of this association, I receive part of the price of the
“ liquor consumed there.”

But, vizier, how does it happen that you come to be the
partner of the keeper of an inn or tavern, in the sale of his
liquors? Is it possible that you should be his purveyor?

“ I his purveyor! this is what I would carefully avoid.
“ Where would be the advantage of selling the wine, which
“ the vine-dresser might have given me as the tribute of
“ his industry? I am better acquainted with the manage-
“ ment of my affairs. In the first place, I am in partner-
“ ship with the vine-keeper or proprietor; with the brewer
“ and the distiller of brandy, by which I obtain part of
“ the price for which they sell them to the inn-holders,
“ or keepers of public houses; and I have afterwards
“ another with the latter, by which they are accountable
“ to me in their turn, for a portion of the price which
“ they receive from the consumer, leaving the seller at
“ liberty to recover from the consumer that share of the
“ price which belongs to me from the consumption.”

It must be acknowledged, that this is very fine. But,
vizier, how do you manage to be present at all the sales
of liquors which are made in your empire? How doth it
happen that you are not pilfered by these inn-keepers, who
have been notoriously dishonest, ever since the times of the
Romans, though the questors were not in partnership with
them? after what you have intrusted to me I do not doubt
of any thing; but I am curious.

“ It is in this instance that I shall appear bold to you,
“ and that you will admire my sagacity. It is impossible
“ to aspire to every kind of merit and of glory. First, no
“ man is allowed to move a hoghead of wine, of cyder,
“ beer, or of brandy, either from the place where it is pro-
“ duced or prepared, or from the warehouse or from the

“ cellar, either to sell or to transport, no matter for what
 “ purpose, without my permission in writing. By this I
 “ know what becomes of them. If any liquor be met
 “ without this passport I seize upon it ; and the proprie-
 “ tor pays me immediately a third or a fourth more than
 “ the value. Afterwards the same agents, who are em-
 “ ployed night and day, in all parts, to ascertain to me
 “ the honesty of the proprietors, or wholesale merchants,
 “ in keeping their compact of association, enter every day
 “ twice rather than once, into the house of each inn or
 “ tavern keeper, where they sound the vessels, reckon the
 “ bottles ; and if there be the least suspicion of pilfering
 “ upon my share, the punishment is so severe as to prevent
 “ their being tempted a second time.”

But, vizier, in order to please you, are not your agents
 so many petty subaltern tyrants ?

“ I make no doubt of it ; and I reward them well for
 “ it.”

Very well ; but, vizier, I have one scruple. These as-
 sociations with the proprietor and with the merchants, in
 wholesale and in retail, have a little the appearance of those
 which the highwayman contracts with the passenger whom
 he robs.

“ You do not consider what you say. My associations
 “ are authorised by law, and by the sacred institution of
 “ the strength of the state. Can no circumstance then
 “ have an influence upon your mind ? But let me now per-
 “ suade you to come with me to the gates of the city,
 “ where you will find me no less admirable. Nothing en-
 “ ters there without bringing some profit to me. Should
 “ they be liquors, they contribute, not in proportion to
 “ their value, as in my other arrangements, but accord-
 “ ing to their quantity ; and you may be assured that I
 “ am not the dupe. The inn-keeper, or the citizen, have
 “ nothing to say, although I have besides some con-
 “ cern with them at the time of the purchase and of the
 “ sale, for it is in a different manner. If they be provisions,
 “ I have my agents, not only at the gates, but at the
 “ slaughter-houses, and in the fish-markets ; and no one
 “ would attempt to plunder me, without risking more than
 “ he could get by the fraud. Less precautions are neces-
 “ sary in respect to wood, forage, or paper. These mer-

“cantile articles cannot be pilfered as a flask of wine is.
“I have, however, my emissaries on the roads, and in the
“bye-places; and woe be to those who should be found
“endeavouring to elude my vigilance. You see, there-
“fore, that whoever dwells in cities, whether he may live
“by his industry, or whether he may employ his income,
“or a part of his profits, in a salary for the industrious
“man, still no one can consume without paying; and
“that all men pay more for the usual and indispensable
“consumptions than for the rest. I have laid every kind
“of industry under contribution, without its perceiving
“it. There are, however, some branches of it with which
“I have endeavoured to treat more directly, because their
“common residence is not in towns, and that I have ima-
“gined they would be more profitable to me from a special
“contribution. For instance, I have agents in the forges
“and furnaces, where iron, which is put to so many dif-
“ferent uses, is manufactured and weighed; I have some
“in the work-shops of the tanners, where the hides, which
“are of such general utility, are manufactured; I have
“some among all those persons who work in gold, silver,
“plate, and jewels; and you will not accuse me, in this
“instance, of attacking objects of primary necessity. In
“proportion as my experiments succeed, I extend them.
“I flatter myself that I shall one day be able to fix my
“satellites by the side of the linen looms, because they
“are so universally useful. But do not impart my secret
“to any one. Whenever my speculations get wind, it is
“always to my detriment.”

I am truly stricken, vizier, with your sagacity, or with that of your sublime predecessors. They have digged mines of gold everywhere. They have made of your country a Peru, the inhabitants of which have, perhaps, had the same destiny as those of the other continent; but of what concern is it to you? But you say nothing to me of the salt and the tobacco, which you sell ten times above their intrinsic value, though salt be the most necessary article in life, after bread and water. What is the meaning of your silence? Are you sensible of the contradiction in your conduct in selling this article, and refusing to collect the other contributions in kind, under pretence of the trouble of selling again?

" Not in the least. The difference is easily perceived.
 " If I received from the proprietor or cultivator his share
 " of contribution in kind, in order to sell it again af-
 " terwards, I become his competitor in the markets. My
 " predecessors have been prudent, in reserving to them-
 " selves the exclusive distribution of them. This hath
 " been attended with some difficulty. In order to bring
 " those two streams of gold into the reservoir of the trea-
 " sury, it was necessary to forbid the culture and the ma-
 " nufacture of tobacco in the nation ; which doth not dis-
 " pense me from keeping upon the frontiers, and even in
 " the interior parts of the empire, an army, to prevent the
 " introduction and the competition, of any other tobacco
 " with mine."

Have you found these experiments successful, vizier ?

" Not so fully as I could have wished, notwithstanding
 " the severity of the penal laws. As for the salt, the dis-
 " sculty was much greater ; I cannot but acknowledge my
 " concern at it. My predecessors committed an irreparable
 " blunder. Under pretence of dispensing a useful favour,
 " necessary to some of the maritime provinces, or, perhaps,
 " induced by the allurements of a considerable sum,
 " though a temporary one, which other provinces paid, to
 " be allowed to furnish themselves with salt as they choose ;
 " they gave way to exceptions, the consequences of which
 " are, that it is not I who sell it, in one third of the extent
 " of the empire, or thereabouts. I am indeed of great
 " hopes of altering this ; but I must wait for the moment
 " of distress."

Independent, therefore, of the armies which you maintain upon the frontiers, to prevent the importation of tobacco and foreign merchandize, you have still others in the inland parts of the country, to prevent the sale of the salt belonging to the free provinces from coming into competition with the sale of yours.

" It is true. However, I must do justice to our ancient
 " viziers. They have left me a very well contrived system
 " of legislation. For instance, those persons of the free
 " countries bordering upon those provinces where I sell,
 " are allowed to sell as little salt as possible, to prevent
 " them from selling it to my prejudice : and by a conse-
 " quence of the same wise measures, those who are to

"purchase of me, and who being near the free countries, might be tempted to provide themselves at a cheaper rate, are compelled to take more than they can consume."

And is this custom consecrated by law?

"Yes, and supported by the august strength of the state. I am authorized to number the families; and if any one of them should not purchase the quantity of salt that I think necessary for their consumption, they are obliged to pay for it, all the same as if they had."

And every person who shall salt their meat with any other salt than yours will certainly suffer for it.

"Exceedingly. Beside the seizure of this iniquitous salt, it costs him more than he would expend for supplying his family for several years."

And what becomes of the seller?

"The seller! He is of course a robber, a plunderer, a malefactor, whom I reduce to beggary if he has any thing, and whom I send to the galleys if he has nothing."

But are you not, vizier, exposed to incessant law-suits?

"I have many upon my hands; but there is a particular court of justice, to which the exclusive determination of them is committed."

And how dost thou extricate thyself from them? Is it by the interference of thy favourite principle, strength of the state?

"With that and with money."

I can but admire, vizier, thy head and thy courage: thy head, which attends to so many objects, and thy courage, which faces so many enemies. You have been typified in the holy scriptures by Ishmael, whose hands were uplifted against all, and those of all raised against him.

"Alas, I own it! But the importance of the strength of the state, and the extent of its wants, are such, that it hath been necessary to have recourse to other expedients. Besides what the proprietor is annually indebted to me for the produce of his estate, if he should resolve to sell it, the purchaser must pay me a sum above the price agreed on with the seller. I have rated all human contracts; and no man enters into any kind of contract without furnishing me a contribution proportioned either to the object or the nature of the convention. This

“ examination implies a set of profound agents. And indeed I am often in want of them. The pleader cannot take one single step, either as plaintiff or defendant, without some benefit arising to me from it : and you will allow that this tribute is very innocent ; for no one is yet disgusted of law-suits.”

Suffer me to take breath, vizier, although thy calculation should not be at an end. Thou hast wearied out my admiration ; and I know not which circumstance should most excite my astonishment, either that perfidious and barbarous science which extends its influence over every thing, and presses upon every thing ; or that patience with which so many repeated acts of subtle tyranny, which spares nothing, are supported. The slave receives his subsistence in exchange for his liberty, while thy wretched contributor is deprived of his liberty by furnishing thee with his subsistence,

Hitherto I have so frequently given way to emotions even of indignation, that I have ventured to think I should be excused for indulging myself for once in ridicule and irony, which have so often decided the most important questions. I resume the character that suits me, and I say,

There undoubtedly must be a degree of public strength in every government, which shall act both within and without : without, to defend the body of the nation against the jealousy, the cupidity, the ambition, the contempt, and violence of other nations ; and this protection, or the security which should be the effect of it, requires armies, fleets, fortresses, arsenals, feeble allies to be kept in pay, and powerful allies to be seconded : within, to preserve the citizen, attached to the order of society, from the troubles, oppressions, and injuries, he may be exposed to from the wicked man, who suffers himself to be led astray by passions, by personal interest, or by his vices, and who is restrained only by the threats of justice, and by the vigilance of the police.

We shall, moreover, venture to advance, that it is advantageous to the greater number of citizens, that the strength of the state should encourage industry, stimulate talents, and assist those who, from an inconsiderate zeal, unforeseen misfortunes, or false speculations, have lost their

own ability. It is from this principle that we trace the necessity of charity-schools and hospitals.

In order to increase the energy of this strength of the state, which, especially in monarchical states, seems to be distinct and separate from the nation, I would even consent that the depositary and director of this public strength should impress awe by a parade of dignity, should attract by mildness, and encourage by rewards, since it is his duty to make it be feared, respected, and cherished.

All these means are expensive. Expences suppose revenue, and a revenue implies contributions. It is just that those who partake of the advantages of the strength of the state should furnish towards its maintenance. There is a tacit but sacred agreement between the sovereign and his subjects, by which the former engages to assist, with a degree of that force proportioned to the portion that has been furnished of it, towards the general mass of contributions; and this distributive justice would be executed of itself by the nature of things, if it were not incessantly disturbed by corruption and vice.

But in every convention there is a proportion between the price and the value of the thing acquired; and this proportion must necessarily be in the ratio of *minus* on the side of the price, and in that of *plus* on the side of the advantages. I am ready to purchase a sword to defend myself against the thief; but if, in order to acquire this sword, I am obliged to empty my purse or to sell my house, I would rather compound with the thief.

Now, where then is this analogy, this proportion of advantages, derived from the strength of the state, *in favour of a proprietor*, when compared with the price which he pays for them, if among the most civilized nations of Europe, the least exposed to excursions and to foreign attacks, after having ceded a part of his possession, he is obliged, when he goes to live in the town, to purchase at an advanced price, for the benefit of this strength of the state, not only the productions of other people, but likewise his own, when he chooses to consume them.

What is this proportion of advantages *for the husbandman*, if he be compelled, on the one hand, to consume in kind a portion of his time, and of the means of his industry, for the construction and the repairing of the roads; and if

he be also obliged to return in money a considerable portion of the productions he hath acquired from the earth by the sweat of his brow and by hard labours?

What is this proportion of advantages *for the mechanic*, who cannot work without food, lodging, clothing, light, and firing, and who cannot supply himself with all these articles without contributing, since these several means of subsistence are taxed, if he be still obliged to return part of the price of his time and of his talents to the impost which falls directly upon the productions of his industry?

What is this proportion of advantages *for the merchant*, who hath already contributed in a variety of ways, both by his personal consumption, by the consumption of his clerks, as well as by the advanced price of the first materials, if he be still obliged to cede a portion of the price of the merchandize which he sends out, and from which he may perhaps receive nothing, in case of some of those numberless accidents, from which this public strength doth not engage either to screen or indemnify him?

What is this proportion of advantage *for all individuals*, if, after having contributed in every progression and exertion of our industry to the common mass, on one hand, by an annual and general impost, that of the poll-tax, which hath no connection, no affinity, either with property or with industry, we still contribute, on the other hand, by the salt, a commodity of primary necessity, which is carried to ten times its intrinsic and natural value?

Once again, what proportion of these advantages belongs *to all individuals*, if we see all these quotas, exacted for the maintenance of the strength of the state, wasted among the extortioners who collect them, while the remainder, which, after several expences of circulation, is poured into the king's treasury, is pillaged in several different manners, or dissipated in extravagance?

We shall also ask, what analogy is there between that strange and complicated variety of contributions, and the advantages which each of us obtains from the strength of the state, if it be true, as certain political calculators pretend, that the sums of those who contribute are equal to those of the revenue of the proprietors?

We can only seek for an answer to this question in the character of the sovereign. If he be cruel, the problem

will not be solved; and time, after a long series of oppression, will bring about the ruin of the empire. If the sovereign should have any sensibility, the problem will be solved in a manner beneficial to his subjects.

The chief of the nation must not, however, flatter himself with effecting any great or lasting good; if he does not make a judicious choice of the man intrusted with the maintenance of the strength of the state. It belongs to that great agent of government to distribute and to render supportable to every individual the enormous weight of the tribute by his equity and by his skill, and to divide it according to the relative degrees of ability or non-ability in the contributors. Without these two circumstances, the oppressed people will fall into a state of despair more or less distant, more or less alarming. With these two circumstances, supported by the expectation of an immediate or approaching relief, they will suffer with patience, and will proceed under their burthen with some share of courage.

But where is the minister who will fulfil so difficult a task? Will it be the minister who, from an odious thirst of wealth, shall have eagerly sought the management of the public revenues, and who having attained that important post by dint of servile intrigue, shall have abandoned the treasury a prey to his passions, his friends, his flatterers, and his favourites, and to the detriment of the strength of the state? Perish the memory of such a minister!

Will it be he who shall view, in the power committed to his hands, nothing more but the instrument of his enmity, or of his personal aversions; who shall consider nothing but how to realize the illusion of his ferocious and disordered imagination; who will treat all measures differing from his own as absurdities; whose anger will be excited against real or pretended errors, as if they were so many crimes; to whom the fable of the stomach and the members shall be an object of ridicule; who shall enervate that part of the body politic that shall be displeasing to him, by granting almost exclusive favours to that which his fancy, his interest, or his prejudices, shall prefer; to whom every thing shall bear the stamp of confusion and disorder, which shall not be consonant to his singular ideas; who, destitute of the wisdom necessary to correct what is defective, shall substitute chimeras to a regular system, perhaps imperfect;

and who, in order to correct pretended abuses, blind to the consequences of an ill-suggested plan of reformation, will subvert every thing with a disdainful smile; an empiric, who is as cruel as ignorant; who, mistaking poison for the remedy, shall announce a speedy cure, when repeated convulsions shall proclaim the impending dissolution of the patient? Perish the memory of such a minister!

Sovereigns, you who are neither exempt from falsehood or seduction, if you have been unfortunate enough to have been directed by such ministers, do not substitute to them a weak and pusillanimous man, who, though well informed, mild, modest, and perhaps incapable of committing any great faults while he acts for himself, will still suffer himself to be misled by others; will fall into the snares that shall be laid for him: and will want that necessary vigour, either to put a stop to, or prevent, the evil, or to act in opposition to yourselves, when his conscience and the general interest shall require it.

Do not substitute the morose, disdainful, and austere man, and much less the imperious and harsh minister. The impost is a heavy burthen; how, therefore, shall it be supported, if the mode of imposing it be aggravated? It is a bitter cup, which all must swallow; if it be presented hastily or awkwardly, it will certainly be spilt.

Do not substitute the man who is ignorant of the law, or who despises it, to attend to nothing but finance. It is the interest of a sovereign, that property and industry should be protected against his own authority, against the enterprises of his ministers, often inconsiderate, and sometimes dangerous. A minister who sacrifices every thing to finance will often fill the coffers of his master; he will give to the nation, and to the throne, the splendour of a formidable power; but this splendour will be momentary as lightning. Despair will seize upon the minds of the subjects. By reducing industry to the most extreme distress, the minister will have acted the part of the man in the fable, who killed the hen which brought forth golden eggs.

Do not substitute a villain, armed at all points with the formalities and subtleties of law, who will keep up a perpetual quarrel between the treasury and the law, who will render the former odious, and will relax the bands of a hard but necessary obedience.

Do not substitute that outrageous philanthropist, who, giving himself up to an ill-judged spirit of patriotism, shall forget the treasury, while he indiscreetly gives way to the seducing impulse of benevolence and popularity; an impulse ever laudable in a philosopher, but to which a minister ought not to yield without great circumspection. For it must still be acknowledged, that the strength of the state must be established, and that there must be a treasury to maintain it.

But above all things, reject the prodigal minister. How is it possible that a man who hath failed in the management of his own affairs can administer those of a great state? When he hath dissipated his own estates, will he be economical of the public revenue? Let us suppose him to have probity, delicacy, knowledge, and a sincere desire of being useful to the state; yet in a circumstance, and upon an object so important as that in question, constitutional virtues are only to be trusted to. How many men are there, who have entered virtuous into the ministry, and who, in six months after their promotion, appeared in a very different light to others, and even to themselves? There is, perhaps, less seduction at the foot of the throne, than in the antichamber of a minister; and still less at the foot of the throne, and in the antichambers of other ministers, than at the entrance of the closet of the minister of finance. But we have dwelt too long on imposts: we must now speak of what hath been suggested to supply its place, of public credit.

In general, what is called credit is only a *Public credit*, delay granted for payment. This was a custom unknown in the first ages. Every family was satisfied with what uncultivated nature, and some coarse labours, supplied to them. Some exchanges were soon begun, but only between relations and neighbours. These connections were extended in all places, where the progress of society multiplied the wants or the pleasures of men. In process of time, it was no longer possible to purchase provisions of one kind with those of another; metals were substituted, and became insensibly the common representative of all things. It happened, that the agents of trade, which were becoming every day more considerable, wanted the money necessary for their speculations. The merchandize was

then delivered, to be paid for at periods more or less distant ; and this fortunate custom still obtains, and will last for ever.

Credit supposes double confidence ; confidence in the person who is in want of it, and confidence in his abilities to pay. The first is the most necessary. It is too common for a man in debt, who is destitute of honesty, to break his engagements, though he be able to fulfil them ; and to dissipate his fortune by irregularity and extravagance. But the sensible and honest man may, by a variety of schemes well conducted, acquire, or replace, the means that have failed him for a time.

The mutual advantage of the purchaser and the seller has given rise to the credit which exists among the individuals of one society, or even of several societies. It differs from public credit in this particular, that the latter is the credit of a whole nation, considered as forming one single body.

Between public and private credit there is also this difference, that profit is the end of the one, and expence of the other. From hence it follows, that credit is gain with respect to the merchant, because it furnishes him with the means of acquiring riches ; but with respect to governments, it is one cause of impoverishing them, since it only supplies them with the means of ruining themselves. A state that borrows alienates a portion of its revenue for a capital which it spends. It is therefore poorer after these loans, than it was before it had recourse to this destructive expedient.

Notwithstanding the scarcity of gold and silver, the ancient governments were unacquainted with public credit, even at the times of the most fatal and critical events. They formed, during peace, a stock that was reserved for times of distress. The specie being by this method circulated afresh, excited industry, and alleviated, in some measure, the inevitable calamities of war. Since the discovery of the New World has made gold and silver more common, those who have had the administration of public affairs have generally engaged in enterprises above the abilities of the people they governed, and have not scrupled to burthen posterity with debts they had ventured to contract. This

system of oppression has been continued: it will affect the latest generations, and oppress all nations and all ages.

It is England, Holland, and France, that is to say, the most opulent nations of Europe, who have given so bad an example. These powers have found credit, for the same reason that we do not lend our money to a man who asks charity, but to him who dazzles us with his brilliant equipage. Confidence hath given birth to loans; and confidence arises of itself at the sight of a country where the richness of the soil is increased by the activity of an industrious people, and at the view of those celebrated ports which receive all the productions of the universe.

The situation of these three states hath also encouraged the lender. They are not only the public revenues that are his guarantee, but also the incomes of individuals, in which the treasury finds, in times of necessity, its support and its resources. In countries which, like Germany, are open on all sides, and which have neither barriers, nor natural means of defence, if the enemy, who can enter into them freely, should either fix, or only sojourn there, for a time, they immediately levy the public revenues for their own benefit, and they even appropriate to themselves, by contributions, a portion of the incomes of individuals. The creditors of the government then experience the same thing as happened to those who had annuities in the Austrian Netherlands, and to whom more than thirty years arrears were due. With England, France, and Holland, which are all three somewhat more or less secured from invasion, there is nothing to fear, except the causes which exhaust them, the effect of which is slower, and consequently more distant.

But should it not be the province of the indigent man to borrow, and of the rich to lend. Wherefore, then, are those states which have the most resources the most in debt. It is because the folly of nations is the same as that of individuals: it is because, being more ambitious, they create to themselves more wants: it is because the confidence they have in their means renders them inattentive to the expences they make: it is because no action at law can be maintained against them; and that their debts are themselves liquidated, whenever they have the effrontery to say, we owe nothing: it is because subjects cannot bring their sovereign to justice: it is because a power hath never been, nor perhaps never

will be seen, to take up arms in favour of their citizens, robbed and plundered by a foreign power: it is because a state renders its neighbours in a manner subject to it by loans: it is because Holland is in constant apprehension, lest the first cannon-shot which should pierce the side of one of her ships should acquit England towards her: it is because an edict dated from Versailles may, without consequences, acquit France to Geneva: it is because these motives, which it would be shameful to acknowledge, act secretly in the breasts and in the councils of powerful kings.

The custom of public credit, though ruinous to every state, is not equally so to all. A nation that has several valuable productions of its own; whose revenue is entirely free; which hath always fulfilled its engagements, which hath not been swayed by the ambition of conquests, and which governs itself; such a nation will raise money at an easier rate, than an empire, the soil of which is not fertile; which is overloaded with debts; which engages in undertakings beyond its strength; which has deceived its creditors, and groans beneath an arbitrary power. The lender, who of course imposes the law, will always proportion the terms to the risks he must run. Thus, a people whose finances are in a state of confusion, will soon fall into the utmost distress by public credit: but even the best regulated government will also experience the decline of its prosperity from it.

But some political arithmeticians have asserted, that it is advantageous to invite the specie of other nations into that of our own country, and that public loans produce that important effect. It is certain, that it is a method of attracting the specie of other nations; but merely, as if it were obtained by the sale of one or more provinces of the empire. Perhaps it would be a more rational practice to deliver up the soil to them, than to cultivate it solely for their use.

But if the state borrowed only of its own subjects, the national revenue would not be given up to foreigners. It certainly would not: but the state would impoverish some of its members, in order to enrich one individual. Must not taxes be increased in proportion to the interest that is to be paid, and the capital that is to be replaced? Will not the proprietors of lands, the husbandmen, and every citizen,

find the burthen greater, than if all the money borrowed by the state had been demanded from them at once. Their situation is the same, as if they themselves had borrowed it, instead of retrenching from their ordinary expences as much as might enable them to supply an accidental charge.

But the paper-currency which is introduced by the loans made to government increases the quantity of wealth in circulation, gives a great extension to trade, and facilitates every commercial transaction. Infatuated men! reflect on the dangerous consequences of your political system. Extend it only as far as possible; let the state borrow all it can; load it with interest to be paid; and by these means reduce it to the necessity of straining every tax to the utmost; ye will soon find, that, with all the wealth you may have in circulation, ye will have no fresh supply for the purposes of consumption and trade. Money, and the paper which represents it, do not circulate of themselves, nor without the assistance of those powers which set them in motion. All the different signs introduced in lieu of coin acquire a value only proportionate to the number of sales and purchases that are made. Let us agree with you, in supposing all Europe filled with gold. If it should have no merchandize to trade with, that gold will have no circulation. Let us only increase commercial effects, and take no concern about these representations of wealth; mutual confidence and necessity will soon occasion them to be established without your assistance. But let your care be principally directed in preventing their increase, by such means as must necessarily diminish the mass of your growing produce.

But the custom of public credit enables one power to give the law to others. Will it never be perceived that this resource is common to all nations. If it be a general mode by which a state may obtain a superiority over its enemies, may it not be serviceable to them for the same purposes? Will not the credit of the two nations be in proportion to their respective wealth, and will they not be ruined without having any other advantages over one another, than those they were in possession of, independent of every loan. When I see monarchs and empires furiously attacking and waging war against each other, with all their debts, with their public funds, and their revenue already deeply mortgaged, it seems to me, says a philosophical

writer, as if I saw men fighting with clubs in a potter's shop surrounded with porcelain.

It would, perhaps, be presumptuous to affirm, that in no circumstance whatsoever the public service can ever require an alienation of part of the public revenues. The scenes that disturb the world are so various; empires are exposed to such extraordinary revolutions; the field of events is so extensive; political interests occasion such amazing changes in public affairs, that it is not within the reach of human wisdom to foresee and calculate every circumstance. But in this instance, it is the ordinary conduct of governments that we are attending to, and not an extraordinary situation, which, in all probability, may never present itself.

Every state which will not be diverted from the ruinous course of loans, by such considerations as we have just been offering, will be the cause of its own destruction. The facility of acquiring large sums of money at once, will engage a government in every kind of unreasonable, rash, and expensive, undertaking; will make it mortgage its future expectations for present exigencies, and game with the present stock to acquire future supplies. One loan will bring on another; and to accelerate the last, the interest will be more and more raised.

This irregularity will cause the fruits of industry to pass into some idle hands. The facility of obtaining every enjoyment without labour will induce every person of fortune, as well as all vicious and intriguing men, to resort to the capital; who will bring with them a train of servants, borrowed from the plough; of young girls, deprived of their innocence, and prevented from marrying; of persons of both sexes, devoted to luxury: all of them the instruments, the victims, the objects, or the sport, of indolence and voluptuousness.

The seducing attraction of public debts will spread more and more. When men can reap the fruits of the earth without labour, every individual will engage in that species of employment which is at once lucrative and easy. Proprietors of land, and merchants, will all become annuitants. Money is converted into paper-currency, established by the state, because it is more portable than specie, less subject to alteration from time, and less liable to the injury of seasons and the rapacity of the farmers of the revenue.

The preference given to the representative paper, above the real specie or commodity, will be injurious to agriculture, trade, and industry. As the state always expends what has been wrongfully acquired in an improper manner, in proportion as its debts increase, the taxes must be augmented, in order to pay the interest. Thus all the active and useful classes of society are plundered and exhausted by the idle useless class of annuitants. The increase of taxes raises the price of commodities, and consequently that of industry. By these means, consumption is lessened; because exportation ceases, as soon as merchandize is too dear to stand the competition of other nations. The lands and manufactures are equally affected.

The inability the state then finds itself in to answer its engagements forces it to extricate itself by bankruptcy; a method the most destructive of the freedom of the people, and of the power of the sovereign. Then the decrees for loans are paid by edicts of reduction. Then the oaths of the monarch, and the rights of the subjects, will be betrayed. Then the surest basis of all governments, public confidence, will be irrecoverably lost. Then the fortune of the rich man is overthrown, and the poor man is deprived of the fruits of his long-continued labours, which he had intrusted to the treasury, in order to secure a subsistence in his old age. Then the labour and the salaries are suspended, and the multitude of laborious persons fall into a kind of palsy, and are reduced to beggary. Then the manufactures are empty, and the hospitals are filled, as they are in times of a pestilence. Then the minds of all men are exasperated against the prince, while his agents are everywhere loaded with imprecations. Then the feeble man, who can submit to lead a life of misery, is condemned to tears; while he to whom nature has given an impatient and stronger mind, arms himself with a dagger, which he turns either against himself or against his fellow-citizen. Then the spirit, the manners, and the health, of the inhabitants of the nation are destroyed; the spirit, by depression and afflictions; the manners, by the necessity of having recourse to resources which are always criminal or dishonest; health, by the same consequences which would follow a sudden famine. Sovereign ministers, is it possible that the image of such calamity should be presented to you, without disturbing your tran-

quillity, or exciting your remorse? If there be a great Judge who waits for you, how will you dare to appear before him, and what sentence can you possibly expect from him. Doubt not but that it will be the same as that which those wretches whom you have made, and whose sole avenger he was, shall have called down upon you. Accursed in this world, you will still be so in the next.

Such is the end of loans; from whence we may judge of the principles upon which they are founded.

Fine arts, and belles lettres. AFTER having examined the springs and support of every civilized society, let us take a view of the ornaments and decorations of the edifice. These are the fine arts, and polite literature.

Nature is the model of both the one and the other. To study nature, and to study her with propriety, to select her best appearances, to copy her faithfully, to correct her defects, and to embellish or collect her scattered beauties, in order to compose of them one marvellous object: these are so many talents infinitely rare. Some of them may accompany the man of genius; others may be the result of study, and of the labours of several great men. Sublimity of thought and expression may prevail, where there is a want of taste. Imagination and invention may display its powers in a man who is impetuous and incorrect. Ages pass away, before there appears an orator, a poet, a painter, or a statuary, in whom judgment, which reflects upon its operations, moderates that ardour which is impatient of advancing in its career.

It is chiefly utility which hath given birth to literature, while the fine arts have owed their origin to the allurements of pleasure.

In Greece they were the offspring of the soil itself. The Greeks, favoured with the most fortunate climate, had a scene of nature incessantly before them, replete with wonderful objects of delight or of horror, rapid streams, craggy mountains, ancient forests, fertile plains, agreeable valleys, and delightful slopes; the sea sometimes calm and sometimes agitated; every thing, in a word, which infuses ardour into the soul, every thing which awakens sensibility,

and extends the imagination. These people, being scrupulous imitators, copied nature at first, such as they saw her. They soon adapted a spirit of discrimination to their models. Attention to the principal functions of the limbs pointed out to them their grossest defects, which they corrected. They afterwards discovered the more trifling imperfections of a figure, which they likewise altered: and thus they raised themselves gradually to the conception of ideal beauty, that is, to the conception of a being, the existence of which is perhaps possible, though not real, for nature makes nothing perfect. Nothing is regular in it, and yet nothing is out of its place. There are too many causes combined at once in the creation, not merely of an entire animal, but even of the smallest similar parts of an animal, that we should expect to find exact symmetry in them. The beautiful of nature consists in a precise series of imperfections. The whole may be censured, but in that whole every part is precisely what it should be. The attentive consideration of a flower, of the branch of a tree, or of a leaf, are sufficient to confirm this opinion.

It was by this slow and laborious mode that painting and sculpture acquired that degree of perfection which astonishes us, in the *Gladiator*, the *Antinous*, and *Venus of Medicis*. To these fortunate causes may be added a language harmonious from its origin, a poetry sublime and full of agreeable as well as terrible images, previous to the birth of the arts; the spirit of liberty; the exercise of the fine arts forbidden to slaves; the intercourse of artists with philosophers; their emulation kept up by labours, rewards, and encomiums; the continual view of the human frame in baths and in the gymnasia, which is a continual lesson for the artist, and the principle of refined taste in the nation; the large and flowing garments which did not deform any part of the body, by pressing and confining it; numberless temples to decorate the statues of the gods and goddesses, and consequently the inestimable value set on beauty, which was to serve as the model; and the custom of consecrating, by monuments, the memorable actions of great men.

Homer had set the example of epic poetry. The olympic games hastened the progress of lyric poetry, of music, and of tragedy. The concatenation of the arts, one with the other, exerted its influence on architecture. Eloquence

assumed dignity and vigour, while it was discussing the public interests.

The Romans, who copied the Greeks in every thing, were inferior to their models, having neither the same gracefulness nor the same originality. In such of their works as were really beautiful, the efforts of an able copyist were frequently observed, a circumstance which was almost unavoidable. If the masterpieces which they had perpetually before them had been destroyed, their genius, left to its own powers and its natural energy, after some trials, and after some deviations, would have soared to a very high degree of perfection, and their works would have had that character of truth which they could not possess, when executed partly from nature and partly from the productions of a school, the spirit of which was unknown to them. These originals were to them as were the works of the Creator; they were ignorant of the manner in which they were produced.

A rigid taste, however, presided over all the performances of the Romans. It guided equally their artists and their writers. Their works were either the image or the copy of truth. The genius of invention, and that of execution, never infringed the proper limits. In the midst of profusion and magnificence the graces were distributed with a prudent hand. Every thing that went beyond the beautiful was skilfully retrenched.

The experience of all nations and of all ages demonstrates, that whatever hath attained to perfection is not long before it degenerates. The revolution is more or less rapid, but always infallible. Among the Romans it was the work of a few ambitious writers, who, despairing to excel, or even equal their predecessors, contrived to open to themselves a new career. To plans closely arranged, to ideas luminous and profound, to images full of dignity, to phrases of great energy, and to expressions suited to every subject, were substituted the spirit of wit, analogies more singular than precise, a continual contrast of words or ideas, a broken and loose style, more striking than natural; in a word, all the faults that are produced from an habitual desire of being brilliant and of pleasing. The arts were drawn into the same vortex; they were carried to excess, too much refined and affected, as eloquence and poet-

ry were. All the productions of genius bore the same mark of degradation.

They emerged from this, but only to fall into one still more fatal. The first men to whom it was given to cultivate the arts, intended to make impressions that should be lively and durable. In order to attain their end with greater certainty, they thought it necessary to enlarge every object. This mistake, which was a necessary consequence of their want of experience, led them to exaggeration. What had been done in the first instance from ignorance, was afterwards revived from flattery. The emperors, who had raised an unlimited power upon the ruins of Roman liberty, would no longer be mere mortals. To gratify this extravagant pride, it was necessary to bestow upon them the attributes of the divinity. Their images, their statues, and their palaces, no longer appeared in their true proportions, but all of them assumed a colossal magnitude. The nations prostrated themselves before these idols, and incense was burnt upon their altars. The people and the artists seduced the poets, the orators, and the historians, whose persons would have been exposed to insult, and whose writings would have appeared satirical, had they confined themselves within the boundaries of truth, taste, and decency.

Such was the deplorable state of the arts and of letters in the south of Europe, when some barbarous hordes, pouring from the northern regions, annihilated what had been only corrupted. These people, after having covered the country places with human bones, and after having strewed the provinces with dead bodies, attacked the towns with that fury which was natural to them. They totally demolished several of those superb cities, in which were collected all the most perfect productions of the industry and genius of man in books, pictures, and statues. Such of those precious monuments as had neither been destroyed nor burnt, were either mutilated or devoted to the meanest uses. The little that had escaped the devastation was obscurely buried under heaps of ruins and ashes. Even Rome herself, so often pillaged by ferocious robbers, was at length become their residence. This mistress of nations, so long the terror and the admiration of the universe, was no more than an object of contempt and pity. In the midst of the ruins of the empire, a few unfortunate persons, who

had escaped the ravages of the sword or of famine, dragged on a disgraceful existence, the slaves of those savages, to whose name even they were strangers, or whom they had enslaved or trampled under foot.

History hath preserved the memory of several warlike people, who, after having subdued enlightened nations, had adopted their customs, their laws, and their knowledge. At the too fatal period which we are now describing, they were the vanquished who basely assimilated themselves to their barbarous conquerors. The reason of this is, that those mean persons who submitted to the foreign yoke, had lost a great deal of the knowledge and of the taste of their ancestors; and that the small remains of them they had preserved were not sufficient to enlighten a conqueror plunged in the grossest ignorance, and who, from the facility of their conquests, had accustomed themselves to consider the arts as a frivolous occupation, and as the instrument of servitude.

Before this age of darkness, christianity had destroyed in Europe the idols of pagan antiquity, and had only preserved some of the arts to assist the power of persuasion, and to favour the preaching of the gospel. Instead of a religion embellished with the gay divinities of Greece and Rome, it had substituted monuments of terror and gloominess, suited to the tragic events which signalized its birth and its progress. The Gothic ages have left us some monuments, the boldness and majesty of which still strike the eye amidst the ruins of taste and elegance. All their temples were built in the shape of the cross, which was also placed on the top of them; and they were filled with crucifixes, and decorated with horrid and gloomy images, with scaffolds, tortures, martyrs, and executioners.

What then became of the arts, condemned as they were to terrify the imagination by continual spectacles of blood, death, and future punishments? They became as hideous as the models they were formed upon; ferocious as the princes and pontiffs that made use of them; mean and base as those who worshipped the productions of them; they frightened children from their very cradles; they aggravated the horrors of the grave by an eternal perspective of terrible shades; they spread melancholy over the whole face of the earth.

At length the period arrived for lessening those scaffoldings of religion and social policy; and this was accomplished by the inhabitants of Greece.

This country is at present barbarous to a great degree. It groans under the yoke of slavery and ignorance. Its climate and some ruins are all it preserves. There is no vestige left of urbanity, emulation, or industry. There are no more enterprises for the public good, no more objects for the productions of genius, no more enthusiasm for the restoration of arts, no more zeal for the recovery of liberty. The glory of Themistocles and of Alcibiades, the talents of Sophocles and Demosthenes, the learning of Lysurgus and of Plato, the policy of Pisistratus and of Pericles, and the labours of Phidias and of Apelles, are all forgotten; every thing hath been destroyed; and a profound darkness covers the region, formerly so productive of miraculous events.

The slaves who walk over the ruins of statues, columns, palaces, temples, and amphitheatres, and who blindly trample so many riches under foot, have lost even the remembrance of the great exploits of which their country was the scene. They have even disfigured the names of the towns and the provinces. They are astonished that the desire of acquiring knowledge should attract into their country learned men and artists. Become insensible to the invaluable remains of their annihilated splendour, they would wish that the same spirit of indifference should be diffused over the whole world. To be allowed to visit this interesting spot, it is necessary to be at great expences, to run great risks, and, beside this, to obtain the protection of government.

These people, though during ten or twelve centuries the interior part of their empire was the prey of civil, religious, and scholastic wars, and though exposed from without to bloody combats, destructive invasions, and continual losses, still preserved some taste and some knowledge: when the disciples of Mahommed, who, armed with the sword and the coran, had subdued with rapidity all the parts of so vast a dominion, seized upon the capital itself.

At this period the fine arts returned with literature from Greece into Italy by the Mediterranean, which maintained the commerce between Asia and Europe. The Huns,

under the name of Goths, had driven them from Rome to Constantinople ; and the very same people, under the name of Turks, expelled them again from Constantinople to Rome. That city, destined as it was to rule by force or by stratagem, cultivated and revived the arts, which had been a long time buried in oblivion.

Walls, columns, statues, and vases, were drawn forth from the dust of ages, and from the ruins of Italy, to serve as models of the fine arts at their revival. The genius which presides over design raised three of the arts at once ; I mean architecture, sculpture, and painting. Architecture, in which convenience itself regulated those proportions of symmetry that contribute to give pleasure to the eye ; sculpture, which flatters princes, and is the reward of great men ; and painting, which perpetuates the remembrance of noble actions, and the examples of mutual tenderness. Italy alone had more superb cities, more magnificent edifices, than all the rest of Europe. Rome, Florence, and Venice, gave rise to three schools of original painters : so much does genius depend upon the imagination, and imagination upon the climate. Had Italy possessed the treasures of Mexico and the productions of Asia, how much more would the arts have been enriched by the discovery of the East and West Indies ?

That country, of old so fruitful in heroes, and since in artists, beheld literature, which is the inseparable companion of the arts, flourish a second time. It had been overwhelmed by the barbarism of a latinity corrupted and disfigured by religious enthusiasm. A mixture of Egyptian theology, Grecian philosophy, and Hebrew poetry ; such was the Latin language in the mouths of monks, who chanted all night, and taught by day things and words they did not understand.

The mythology of the Romans revived in literature the graces of antiquity. The spirit of imitation borrowed them at first indiscriminately. Custom introduced taste in the choice of those rich treasures. The Italian genius, too fertile not to invent, blended its enthusiasm and caprice with the rules and examples of its old masters, and joined even the fictions of fairy land with those of fable. The works of imitation partook of the manners of the age and of the national character. Petrarch had drawn that celestial vir-

gin beauty, which served as a model for the heroines of chivalry. Armida was the emblem of the coquetry which reigned in her time in Italy. Ariosto confounded every species of poetry, in a work, which may rather be called the labyrinth of poetry, than a regular poem. That author will stand alone in the history of literature, like the enchanted palaces of his own construction in the deserts.

Letters and arts, after crossing the sea, passed the Alps. In the same manner as the crusades had brought the oriental romances into Italy, the wars of Charles VIII and Lewis XII introduced into France some principles of good literature. Francis I, if he had not been into Italy in order to contend for the Milanese with Charles V, would never, perhaps, have been ambitious of the title of *the father of letters*: but these seeds of knowledge and improvement in the arts were lost in the religious wars. They were recovered again, if I may be allowed the expression, in scenes of war and destruction; and the time came when they were again to revive and flourish. Italy was as much distinguished in the 16th century, as France was in the succeeding one, which, by the victories of Lewis XIV, or rather by the genius of the great men that flourished together under his reign, deserves to make an epocha in the history of the fine arts.

In France all the efforts of the human mind were at once exerted in producing works of genius, as they had before been in Italy. Its powers were displayed in the marble and on the canvas, in public edifices and gardens, as well as in eloquence and poetry. Every thing was submitted to its influence, not only the arts of ingenuity, which are mechanical, and require manual labour, but those also which depend solely on the mind. Every thing bore the stamp of genius. The colours displayed in natural objects enlivened the works of imagination; and the human passions animated the designs of the pencil. Man gave spirit to matter, and body to spirit. But it deserves to be particularly observed that this happened at a time when a passion for glory animated a nation, great and powerful by its situation, and the extent of its empire. The sense of honour which raised it in its own estimation, and which then distinguished it in the eyes of all Europe, was its soul, its instinct, and supplied the place of that liberty which had

formerly given rise to the arts of genius in the republics of Athens and of Rome, which had revived them in that of Florence, and compelled them to flourish on the bleak and cloudy borders of the Thames.

What would not genius have effected in France, had it been under the influence of laws only, when its exertions were so great under the dominion of the most absolute of kings? When we see what energy patriotism has given to the English, in spite of the inactivity of their climate, we may judge what it might have produced among the French, where a most mild temperature of seasons leads a people, naturally sensible and lively, to invention and enjoyment. We may conceive what its effects would have been in a country, where, as in ancient Greece, are to be found men of active and lively genius, fitted for invention; from being warmed by the most powerful and enlivening rays of the sun; where there are men strong and robust in a climate, in which even the cold excites to labour; in which we meet with temperate provinces between north and south; sea-ports, together with navigable rivers; vast plains abounding in corn; hills loaded with vineyards and fruits of all sorts; salt pits which may be increased at pleasure; pastures covered with horses; mountains clothed with the finest woods; a country everywhere peopled with laborious hands, which are the first resources for subsistence; the common materials for the arts, and the superfluities of luxury; in a word, where we meet with the commerce of Athens, the industry of Corinth, the soldiery of Sparta, and the flocks of Arcadia. With all these advantages, which Greece once possessed, France might have carried the fine arts to as great a height as that parent of genius, had she been subject to the same laws, and given a scope to the same exercise of reason and liberty, by which great men, and the rulers of powerful nations, are produced.

Next to the superiority of legislation among modern nations, to raise them to an equality with the ancients in works of genius, there has, perhaps, been wanting only an improvement in language. The Romans, who, like the Greeks, knew the influence of dialect over the manners, had endeavoured to extend their language with their arms; and they had succeeded in causing it to be adopted in all

places where they had established their dominion. Almost all Europe spoke Latin, except only a few obscure men, who had taken refuge among inaccessible mountains : but the invasion of the barbarians soon changed the nature of this language. With the harmonious sounds of an idiom polished by genius and by delicate organs, these people, who were warriors and hunters, blended the rude accents and the coarse expressions they brought along with them from their gloomy forests and severe climate. There were soon as many different languages as forms of governments. At the revival of letters, these languages must naturally have acquired a more sublime and a more agreeable pronunciation. This improvement took place but very slowly, because all those who had any talents for writing, disdaining a language destitute of graces, strength, and amenity, employed in their performances, with greater or less propriety, the language of the ancient Romans.

The Italians were the first who shook off this humiliating yoke. Their language, with harmony, accent, and quantity, is peculiarly adapted to express all the images of poetry, and convey all the delightful impressions of music. These two arts have consecrated this language to the harmony of sound, it being the most proper to express it.

The French language holds the superiority in prose ; if it be not the language of the gods, it is, at least, that of reason and of truth. Prose is peculiarly adapted to convince the understanding in philosophical researches. It enlightens the minds of those whom nature has blessed with superior talents, who seem placed between princes and their subjects to instruct and direct mankind. At a period when liberty has no longer her tribunes nor amphitheatres to excite commotions in vast assemblies of the people, a language which spreads itself in books, which is read in all countries, which serves as the common interpreter of all other languages, and as the vehicle of all sorts of ideas ; a language ennobled, refined, softened, and above all, settled by the genius of writers and the polish of courts, becomes at length universally prevailing.

The English language has likewise had its poets and its prose-writers, who have gained it the character of energy and boldness, sufficient to render it immortal. May it be learned among all nations who aspire not to be slaves !

They will dare to think, act, and govern themselves. It is not the language of words, but of ideas ; and the English have none but such as are strong and forcible ; they are the first who ever made use of the expression, *the majesty of the people*, and that alone is sufficient to consecrate a language.

The Spaniards have hitherto properly had neither prose nor verse, though they have a language formed to excel in both. Brilliant and sonorous as pure gold, its pronunciation is grave and regular, like the dances of that nation ; is grand and decent, like the manners of ancient chivalry. This language may claim some distinction, and even acquire a superior degree of perfection, whenever there shall be found in it many such writers as Cervantes and Mariana. When its academy shall have put to silence the inquisition and its universities, that language will raise itself to great ideas, and to sublime truths, to which it is invited by the natural pride of the people who speak it.

Prior to all other living languages is the German, that mother tongue, that original native language of Europe. From thence the English and French too have been formed, by the mixture of the German with the Latin. However, as it seems little calculated to please the eye, or to be pronounced by delicate organs, it has been spoken only by the people, and has been introduced but of late into books. The few writers that have appeared in it, seemed to shew that it belonged to a country where the fine arts, poetry, and eloquence, were not destined to flourish. But on a sudden, genius has exerted her powers ; and originals, in more than one species of poetry, have appeared rather in considerable numbers sufficient to enter into competition with other nations.

Languages could not be cultivated and refined to a certain degree, but the arts of every kind must at the same time acquire an equal degree of perfection ; and indeed the monuments of these arts have so much increased throughout Europe, that the barbarism of succeeding people and of future ages will find it difficult entirely to destroy them.

But as commotions and revolutions are so natural to mankind, there is only wanting some glowing genius, some enthusiast, to set the world again in flames. The people

of the east, or of the north, are still ready to enslave and plunge all Europe into its former darkness. Would not an irruption of Tartars or Africans into Italy, be sufficient to overturn churches and palaces, to confound in one general ruin the idols of religion and the masterpieces of art? And as we are so much attached to these works of luxury, we should have the less spirit to defend them. A city, which it has cost two centuries to decorate, is burnt and ravaged in a single day. Perhaps, with one stroke of his axe, a Tartar may dash in pieces the statue of Voltaire, that Pigalle could not finish within the compass of ten years; and we still labour for immortality; vain atoms as we are, impelled, the one by the other, into that obscurity from whence we came. Ye nations, whether artificers or soldiers, what are ye in the hands of Nature, but the sport of her laws, destined by turns to set dust in motion, and to reduce the work again to dust?

But it is by means of the arts that man enjoys his existence, and survives himself. Ages of ignorance never emerge from their oblivion. There remains no more trace of them after their existence, than before they began to exist. There is no possibility of indicating the place or time of their passage, nor can we mark on the ground belonging to a barbarous people, *it is here they lived*; for they leave not even ruins to lead us to collect that they have ever existed. It is invention alone that gives man power over matter and time. The genius of Homer has rendered the Greek language indelible. Harmony and reason have placed the eloquence of Cicero above all the sacred orators. The pontiffs themselves, polished and enlightened by the information and attractive influence of the arts, by being admirers and protectors of them, have assisted the human mind to break the chains of superstition. Commerce has hastened the progress of art by means of the luxury which wealth has diffused. All the efforts of the mind, and the exertions of manual labour, have been united to embellish and to improve the condition of the human species. Industry and invention, together with the enjoyments procured by the New World, have penetrated as far as the polar circle, and the fine arts are attempting to rise superior to the obstacles of nature even at Petersburg.

Orators, poets, historians, painters, and statuaries, are

made to be the friends of great men. Heralds of their fame during their life, they are the eternal preservers of it when they no longer exist. In rendering their names immortal, they immortalise themselves. It is by these several orders of men, that the nations distinguish themselves among contemporary nations. The arts, after having rendered them illustrious, also restore wealth to them, when they are become indigent. It is ancient Rome which at present subsists modern Rome. Let the people whom they honour, both at the present and at future times, if they be not ungrateful, honour them in their turn. Ye nations, you will pass away, but their productions will remain. The torch of genius, which enlightens you, will be extinguished if you neglect it; and after having walked in darkness for some ages, you will fall in the abyss of oblivion, which hath swallowed up so many nations that have preceded you, not because they have been destitute of virtues, but of a sacred voice to celebrate them.

Beware especially of adding persecution to indifference. It is certainly enough for a writer to brave the resentment of the intolerant magistrate, of the fanatic spirit, of the suspicious nobleman, and of all ranks of men proud of their prerogatives, without being also exposed to the severities of government. To inflict upon a philosopher an infamous or capital punishment, is to condemn him to pusillanimity or to silence: it is to stifle or to banish genius; it is to put a stop to national information, and to the progress of knowledge.

It will be said, that these reflections are those of a man who is thoroughly determined to speak without circumspection of persons and things: of persons, whom one scarce dares to address with frankness; of things, concerning which a writer endowed with a little share of sense neither thinks nor expresses himself as the vulgar, and who yet would wish to escape proscription. This may possibly be the case, and wherefore should it not be? Nevertheless, whatever may happen, I will never betray the honourable cause of liberty. If I experience nothing but misfortunes from it, which I neither expect nor dread, so much the worse for the author of those misfortunes. He will be detested during life, for one instant of my existence which he shall have disposed of with injustice and violence.

His name will be handed down to future ages branded with ignominy ; and this cruel sentence would be independent of the small value, or of the little merit of my writings.

To the train of letters and fine arts philosophy is annexed, which one would imagine ought rather to direct them ; but appearing later than they did, can only be considered as their attendant. Arts arise from the very necessities of mankind in the earliest state of the human mind. Letters are the flowers of its youth ; children of the imagination, being themselves fond of ornament, they decorate every thing they approach ; and this turn for embellishment produces what are properly called the fine arts, or the arts of luxury and elegance, which give the polish to the primary arts of necessity. It is then we see the winged genii of sculpture fluttering over the porticos of architecture ; and the genii of painting entering palaces, representing the heavens upon a ceiling, sketching out upon wool and silk all the animated scenes of rural life, and tracing to the mind upon canvas the useful truths of history, as well as the agreeable chimeras of fable.

When the mind has been employed on the pleasures of imagination and of the senses, when governments have arrived to a degree of maturity, reason arises and bestows on the nations a certain turn for reflection ; this is the age of philosophy. She advances with gradual steps, and proceeds silently along, announcing the decline of empires which she attempts in vain to support. She closed the latter ages of the celebrated republics of Greece and Rome. Athens had no philosophers till the eve of her ruin, which they seemed to foretel : Cicero and Lucretius did not compose their writings on the nature of the gods, and the system of the world, till the confusion of the civil wars arose, and hastened the destruction of liberty.

Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, had however laid the foundations of natural philosophy in the theories of the elements of matter ; but the rage of forming systems successively subverted these several principles. Socrates then appeared, who brought back philosophy to the principles of true wisdom and virtue : it was that alone he loved, practised, and taught, persuaded that morality,

and not science, was conducive to the happiness of man. Plato, his disciple, though a natural philosopher, and instructed in the mysteries of nature by his travels into Egypt, ascribed every thing to the soul, and scarce any thing to nature; he confounded philosophy with theological speculations, and the knowledge of the universe with the ideas of the divinity. Aristotle, the disciple of Plato, turned his inquiries less on the nature of the Deity, than on that of man and of animals. His natural history has been transmitted to posterity, though it was holden only in moderate estimation by his contemporaries. Epicurus, who lived nearly about the same period, revived the atoms of Democritus; a system, which doubtless balanced that of the four elements of Aristotle: and as these were the two prevailing systems at that time, no improvements were made in natural philosophy. The moral philosophers engaged the attention of the people, who understood their system better than that of the natural philosopher. They established schools; for as soon as opinions gain a degree of reputation, parties are immediately formed to support them.

In these circumstances, Greece, agitated by interior commotions, after having been torn with an intestine war, was subdued by Macedonia, and its government dissolved by the Romans. Then public calamities turned the hearts and understandings of men to morality. Zeno and Democritus, who had been only natural philosophers, became, a considerable time after their death, the heads of two sects of moral philosophers, more addicted to theology than physics, rather casuists than philosophers; or it might rather be affirmed, that philosophy was given up and confined entirely to the sophists. The Romans, who had borrowed every thing from the Greeks, made no discoveries in the true system of philosophy. Among the ancients it made little progress; because it was entirely confined to morality: among the moderns, its first steps have been more fortunate, because they have been guided by the light of natural knowledge.

We must not reckon the interval of near a thousand years, during which period philosophy, science, arts, and letters, were buried in the ruins of the Roman empire, among the ashes of ancient Italy, and the dust of the

cloisters. In Asia, their monuments were still preserved, though not attended to ; and in Europe, some fragments of them remained which she did not know. The world was divided into christian and mohammedan, and everywhere covered with the blood of nations : ignorance alone triumphed under the standard of the cross or the crescent. Before these dreaded signs, every knee was bent, every spirit trembled.

Philosophy continued in a state of infancy, pronouncing only the names of God and of the soul ; her attention was solely engaged on matters of which she should for ever have remained ignorant. Time, argument, and all her application, were wasted on questions that were, at least, idle ; questions, for the most part, void of sense, not to be defined, and not to be determined from the nature of their object ; and which, therefore, proved an eternal source of disputes, schisms, sects, hatred, persecution, and national as well as religious wars.

In the meantime, the Arabs, after their conquests, carried away, as it were in triumph, the spoils of genius and philosophy. Aristotle fell into their hands, preserved from the ruins of ancient Greece. These destroyers of empires had some sciences of which they had been the inventors ; among which arithmetic is to be numbered. By the knowledge of astronomy and geometry, they discovered the coasts of Africa, which they laid waste, and peopled again ; and they were always great proficients in medicine. That science, which has, perhaps, no greater recommendation in its favour, than its affinity with chemistry and natural knowledge, rendered them as celebrated as astrology, which is another support of empirical imposition. Avicenna and Averroës, who were equally skilled in physic, mathematics, and philosophy, preserved the tradition of true science by translations and commentaries. But let us imagine what must become of Aristotle, translated from Greek into Arabic, and after that, from Arabic into Latin, under the hands of monks, who wanted to adapt the philosophy of paganism to the systems of Moses and Christ. This confusion of opinions, ideas, and language, stopped for a considerable time the progress of science, and the reducing of it into a regular system. The divine overturned the materials brought by the philosopher, who sapped the very found-

ations laid by his rival. However, with a few stones from one, and much sand from the other, some wretched architects raised a strange Gothic monument, called the philosophy of the schools. Continually amended, renewed, and supported, from age to age, by Irish or Spanish metaphysicians, it maintained itself till about the time of the discovery of the New World, which was destined to change the face of the Old one.

Light sprang from the midst of darkness. An English monk applied himself to the practice of chemistry, and paving the way for the invention of gunpowder, which was to bring America into subjection to Europe, opened the avenues of true science by experimental philosophy. Thus philosophy issued out of the cloister, where ignorance remained. When Boccacio had exposed the debauched lives of the regular and secular clergy, Galileo ventured to form conjectures upon the figure of the earth. Superstition was alarmed at it; and its clamours, as well as its menaces, were heard: but philosophy tore off the mask from the monster, and rent the veil under which truth had been hidden. The weakness and falsehood of popular opinions was perceived, on which society was then founded; but in order to put an effectual stop to error, it was necessary to be acquainted with the laws of nature, and the causes of her various phenomena: and that was the object philosophy had in view.

As soon as Copernicus was dead, after he had, by the power of reason, conjectured that the sun was in the centre of our world, Galileo arose, and confirmed, by the invention of the telescope, the true system of astronomy, which either had been unknown, or lay in oblivion ever since Pythagoras had conceived it. While Gassendi was reviving the elements of ancient philosophy, or the atoms of Epicurus, Descartes imagined and combined the elements of a new philosophy, or his ingenious and subtle vortexes. Almost about the same time, Toricelli invented, at Florence, the barometer, to determine the weight of the air; Pascal measured the height of the mountains of Auvergne; and Boyle, in England, verified and confirmed the various experiments of both.

Descartes had taught the art of doubting, in order to undeceive the mind previous to instruction. The method

Of doubting proposed by him was the grand instrument of science, and the most signal service that could be rendered to the human mind under the darkness which surrounded, and the chains, which fettered it. Bayle, by applying that method to opinions the best authorised by the sanction of time and power, has made us sensible of its importance.

Chancellor Bacon, a philosopher, but unsuccessful at court, as Friar Bacon had been in the cloister, like him the harbinger rather than the establisher of the new philosophy, had protested equally against the prejudice of the senses and the schools, as against those phantoms he styled the idols of the understanding. He had foretold truths he could not discover. In conformity to the result of his reasoning, which might be discovered as oracular, while experimental philosophy was discovering facts, rational philosophy was in search of causes. Both contributed to the study of mathematics, which were to guide the efforts of the mind, and insure their success. It was, in fact, the science of algebra applied to geometry, and the application of geometry to natural philosophy, which made Newton conjecture the true system of the world. Upon taking a view of the heavens, he perceived in the fall of bodies to the earth, and in the motions of the heavenly bodies, a certain analogy which implied an universal principle, differing from impulse, the only visible cause of all their movements. From the study of astronomy he next applied himself to that of optics, and this led him to conjecture the origin of light; and the experiments which he made in consequence of this inquiry reduced it into a system.

At the time when Descartes died, Newton and Leibnitz were but just born, who were to finish, correct, and bring to perfection, what he had begun; that is to say, the establishing of sound philosophy. These two men alone greatly contributed to its quick and rapid progress. One carried the knowledge of God and the soul so far as reason could lead it; and the unsuccessfulness of his attempts undeceived the human mind for ever with respect to such false systems of metaphysics. The other extended the principles of natural philosophy and the mathematics much further than the genius of many ages had been able to carry them, and pointed out the road to truth. At the same time, Locke, preceded by Hobbes, a man on whom nature had

bestowed an uncommon understanding, and who had remained obscure from the very boldness of his principles, which ought to have had a contrary effect; Locke, I say, attacked scientific prejudices, even into the intrenchments of the schools: he dissipated all those phantoms of the imagination, which Malebranche suffered to spring up again, after he had pointed out their absurdity, because he did not attack the foundation on which they were supported.

But we are not to suppose that philosophers alone have discovered and imagined every thing. It is the course of events which has given a certain tendency to the actions and thoughts of mankind. A complication of natural or moral causes, a gradual improvement in politics, joined to the progress of study and of the sciences, a combination of circumstances which it was as impossible to hasten as to foresee, must have contributed to the revolution that has prevailed in the understandings of men. Among nations, as among individuals, the body and soul act and react alternately upon each other. Popular opinions infect even philosophers, and philosophers are guides to the people. Galileo had asserted, that, as the earth turned round the sun, there must be antipodes; and Drake proved the fact, by a voyage round the world. The church styled itself universal, and the pope called himself master of the earth; and yet, more than two thirds of its inhabitants did not so much as know there was any catholic religion, and particularly that there was a pope. Europeans, who have travelled and trafficked everywhere, taught Europe that one portion of the globe adopted the visionary opinions of Mohammed, and a still larger one lived in the darkness of idolatry, or in the total ignorance and unenlightened state of atheism. This philosophy extended the empire of human knowledge, by the discovery of the errors of superstition, and of the truths of nature.

Italy, whose impatient genius penetrated through the obstacles that surrounded it, was the first that founded an academy of natural philosophy. France and England, who were to aggrandize themselves even by their competition, raised at one time two everlasting monuments to the improvement of philosophy: two academies, from whence all the learned men of Europe derive their information, and in

which they deposit all their stores of knowledge. From hence have been brought to light a great number of the mysterious points in nature; experiments, phenomena, discoveries in the arts and sciences, the secrets of electricity, and the causes of the aurora borealis. Hence have proceeded the instruments and means of purifying air on-board of ships, for making sea-water fit to be drunk, for determining the figure of the earth, and ascertaining the longitudes; for improving agriculture, and for producing more grain, with less seed and less labour.

Aristotle had reigned ten centuries in all the schools of Europe; and the christians, after losing the guidance of reason, were able to recover it again only by following his footsteps. Their implicit attachment to that philosopher had, for a considerably time, caused them to err, in blindly following him through the darkness of theological doctrines. But at length Descartes pointed out the way, and Newton supplied the power of extricating them out of that labyrinth. Doubt had dissipated prejudices, and the method of analysis had found out the truth. After the two Bacons, Galileo, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, and Bayle, Leibnitz and Newton, after the memoirs of the academies of Florence and Leipsic, of Paris and London, there still remained a great work to be composed, in order to perpetuate the sciences and philosophy. This work hath now appeared.

This book, which contains all the errors and all the truths that have issued from the human mind, from the doctrines of theology to the speculations on insects; which contains an account of every work of the hands of men from a ship to a pin; this repository of the intelligence of all nations, which would have been more perfect, had it not been executed in the midst of all kinds of persecutions and of obstacles; this repository will, in future ages, characterise that of philosophy, which, after so many advantages procured to mankind, ought to be considered as a divinity on earth. It is she who unites, enlightens, aids, and comforts, mankind. She bestows every thing upon them, without exacting any worship in return. She requires of them, not the sacrifice of their passions, but a reasonable, useful, and moderate, exercise of all their faculties. Daughter of nature, dispenser of her gifts, interpreter

of her rights, she consecrates her intelligence and her labour to the use of man. She renders him better, that he may be happier. She detests only tyranny and imposture, because they oppress mankind. She does not desire to rule; but she exacts of such as govern, to consider public happiness as the only source of their enjoyment. She avoids contests, and the name of sects, but she tolerates them all. The blind and the wicked calumniate her; the former are afraid of perceiving their errors, and the latter of having them detected. Ungrateful children, who rebel against a tender mother, when she wishes to free them from their errors and vices, which occasion the calamities of mankind!

Light, however, spreads insensibly over a more extensive horizon. Literature has formed a kind of empire which prepares the way for making Europe be considered as one single republican power. In truth, if philosophy be ever enabled to insinuate itself into the minds of sovereigns, or their ministers, the system of politics will be improved, and rendered simple. Humanity will be more regarded in all plans; the public good will enter into negotiations, not merely as an impression, but as an object of utility even to kings.

Printing has already made such a progress, that it can never be put a stop to in any state, without lowering the people, in order to advance the authority of government. Books enlighten the body of the people, humanise the great, are the delights of the leisure hours of the rich, and inform all the classes of society. The sciences bring to perfection the different branches of political economy. Even the errors of systematical persons are dispelled by the productions of the press, because reasoning and discussion try them by the test of truth.

An intercourse of knowledge is become necessary for industry, and literature alone maintains that communication. The reading of a voyage round the world, has, perhaps, occasioned more attempts of that kind; for interest alone cannot find the means of enterprise. At present nothing can be cultivated without some study, or without the knowledge that has been handed down and diffused by reading. Princes themselves have not recovered their rights from the usurpations of the clergy, but by the assistance of that

knowledge which has undeceived the people with respect to the abuses of all spiritual power.

But it would be the greatest folly of the human mind to have employed all its powers to increase the authority of kings, and to break the several chains that held it in subjection, in order to become the slave of despotism. The same courage that religion inspires to withdraw conscience from the tyranny exercised over opinion, the honest man, the citizen, and friend of the people, ought to maintain, to free the nations from the tyranny of such powers as conspire against the liberty of mankind. Woe to that state in which there is not to be found one single defender of the public rights of the nation. The kingdom, with all its riches, its trade, its nobles, and its citizens, must soon fall into unavoidable anarchy. It is the laws that are to save a nation from destruction, and the freedom of writing is to support and preserve laws. But what is the foundation and bulwark of the laws? It is morality.

Attempts have too long been made to de-grade man. His detractors have made a monster *Morals* of him. In their spleen they have loaded him with outrages; the guilty satisfaction of lowering the human species hath alone conducted their gloomy pencils. Who art thou then who dar'st thus to insult thy fellow-creatures? What place gave thee birth? Is it from the inmost recesses of thy heart that thou hast poured forth so many blasphemies? If thy pride had been less insatuated, or thy disposition less ferocious and barbarous, thou wouldst have seen only in man a being always feeble, often seduced by error, sometimes carried away by imagination, but produced from the hands of nature with virtuous propensities.

Man is born with the seeds of virtue, although he be not born virtuous. He doth not obtain to this sublime state till after he hath studied himself, till after he hath become acquainted with his duties, and contracted the habit of fulfilling them. The science which leads to that high degree of perfection is called morality. It is the rule of actions, and, if one may be allowed the expression, the art of virtue. Encouragements and praises are due for all the labours undertaken to remove the calamities which surround us, to increase the number of our enjoyments, to em

bellish the dream of our life, to exalt, to improve, and to illustrate our species. Eternal blessings upon those who, by their studies and by their genius, have procured any of these advantages to human nature! But the first crown will be for that wise man whose affecting and enlightened writings will have had a more noble aim, that of making us better.

The hope of obtaining so great a glory hath given rise to numberless productions. What a variety of useless and even pernicious books! They are in general the work of priests and their disciples, who, not choosing to see that religion should consider men only in the relation they stand in to the Divinity, made it necessary to look for another ground for the relations they bear to one another. If there be an universal system of morality, it cannot be the effect of a particular cause. It has been the same in past ages, and it will continue the same in future times: it cannot then be grounded on religious opinions, which, ever since the beginning of the world, and from one pole to the other, have continually varied. Greece had vicious deities, the Romans had them likewise: the senseless worshipper of the Fetiches adores rather a devil than a god. Every people made gods for themselves, and gave them such attributes as they chose: to some they ascribed goodness, to others cruelty, to some immorality, and to others the greatest sanctity and severity of manners. One would imagine, that every nation intended to deify its own passions and opinions. Notwithstanding this diversity in religious systems and modes of worship, all nations have perceived that men ought to be just; they have all honoured as virtues, goodness, pity, friendship, fidelity, paternal tenderness, filial respect, sincerity, gratitude, patriotism; in a word, all those sentiments which may be considered as so many ties adapted to unite men more closely to one another. The origin of that uniformity of judgment, so constant, so general, ought not then to be looked for in the midst of contradictory and transient opinions. If the ministers of religion have appeared to think otherwise, it is because by their system they were enabled to regulate all the actions of mankind, to dispose of their fortunes and command their wills, and to secure to themselves, in the name of Heaven, the attributory government of the world.

Their empire was so absolute, that they had succeeded in establishing that barbarous system of morality, which placed the only pleasures that make life supportable in the rank of the greatest crimes ; an abject morality, which imposed the obligation of being pleased with humiliation and shame ; an extravagant morality, which threatened with the same punishments both the foibles of love and the most atrocious actions ; a superstitious morality, which enjoined to murder, without compassion, all those who swerved from the prevailing opinions ; a puerile morality, which founded the most essential duties upon tales equally disgusting and ridiculous ; an interested morality, which admitted no other virtues than those which were useful to priesthood, nor no other crimes than those which were contrary to it. If priests had only encouraged men to observe natural morality by the hope or the fear of future rewards and punishments, they would have deserved well of society ; but in endeavouring to support by violence useful tenets, which had only been introduced by the mild way of persuasion, they have removed the veil which concealed the depth of their ambition : the mask is fallen off.

It is more than two thousand years since Socrates, spreading out a veil above our heads, had declared, that nothing of what was passing beyond that veil concerned us ; and that the actions of men were not good because they were pleasing to the gods, but that they were pleasing to the gods because they were good : a principle which separated morality from religion.

Accordingly, at the tribunal of philosophy and reason, morality is a science, the object of which is the preservation and common happiness of the human species. To this double end all its rules ought to be referred. Their natural, constant, and eternal, principle is in man himself, and in a resemblance there is in the general organization of men, which includes a similarity of wants, of pleasures, and pains, of force and weakness ; a similarity from whence arises the necessity of society, or of a common opposition against such dangers as are equally incident to each individual, which proceeds from nature herself, and threatens man on all sides. Such is the origin of particular connections and domestic virtues : such is the origin

of general duties and of public virtues : such is the source of the notion of personal and public utility, the source of all compacts between individuals, and of all laws.

There is, properly speaking, only one virtue, which is justice, and only one duty, to make one's self happy. The virtuous man is he who hath the most exact notions of justice and happiness, and whose conduct conforms most rigorously to them. There are two tribunals, that of nature, and that of the laws.

The law chastises crimes, nature chastises vices. The law presents the gallows to the assassin, nature presents sloppiness or consumption to intemperance.

Several writers have endeavoured to trace the first principles of morality in the sentiments of friendship, tenderness, compassion, honour, and benevolence, because they found them engraven on the human heart. But did they not also find there hatred, jealousy, revenge, pride, and the love of dominion? For what reason, therefore, have they founded morality on the former principles rather than on the latter? It is because they have understood that the former were of general advantage to society, and the others fatal to it. Those philosophers have perceived the necessity of morality; they have conceived what it ought to be, but have not discovered its leading and fundamental principle. The very sentiments, indeed, which they adopt as the ground-work of morality, because they appear to be serviceable to the common good, if left to themselves, would be very prejudicial to it. How can we determine to punish the guilty, if we listen only to the pleas of compassion? How shall we guard against partiality, if we consult only the dictates of friendship? How shall we avoid being favourable to idleness, if we attend only to the sentiments of benevolence? All these virtues have their limits, beyond which they degenerate into vices; and those limits are settled by the invariable rules of essential justice, or, which is the same thing, by the common interests of men united together in society, and the constant object of that union.

Is it on its own account that valour is ranked among the number of virtues? No; it is on account of the service it is of to society. This is evident from the cir-

cumstance of its being punished as a crime in a man who makes use of it to disturb the public peace. Wherefore is drunkenness a vice: because every man is bound to contribute to the common good; and, to fulfil that obligation, he must maintain the free exercise of his faculties. Wherefore are certain actions more blameable in a magistrate or general than in a private man? Because greater inconveniences result from them to society.

The obligations of the man separated from society are unknown to me, since I can neither perceive the source nor the end of them. As he lives by himself, he is certainly at liberty to live for himself alone. No being has a right to require succours from him which he does not implore for himself. It is quite the contrary with respect to a person who lives in the social state. He is nothing by himself, and is supported only by what surrounds him. His possessions, his enjoyments, his powers, and even his own existence, all belong entirely to the body of the state: he owes them all to the body politic, of which he is a member.

The misfortunes of society become those of the citizen; he runs the risk of being crushed, whatever part of the edifice may fall down. If he should commit an injustice, he is threatened with a similar one. If he should give himself up to crimes, others may become criminal to his prejudice. He must therefore tend constantly to the general good, since it is upon this prosperity that his own depends.

If one single individual should attend only to his interest, without any concern for those of the public; if he should exempt himself from the common duty, under pretence that the actions of one individual cannot have a determined influence upon the general order, other persons will also be desirous of indulging their personal propensities. Then all the members of the republic will become alternately executioners and victims. Every one will commit and receive injuries, every one will rob and be robbed, every one will strike and receive a blow. A state of warfare will prevail between all sorts of individuals. The state will be ruined, and the citizens will be ruined with the state.

The first men who collected themselves into society were undoubtedly not immediately sensible of the whole of these truths. The idea of their strength being most prevalent in them, they were probably desirous of obtaining every thing by the exertion of it. Repeated calamities warned them, in process of time, of the necessity of forming conventions. Reciprocal obligations increased in proportion as the necessity of them was felt: thus it is that duty began with society.

Duty may therefore be defined to be the rigid obligation of doing whatever is suitable to society. It includes the practice of all the virtues, since there is not one of them which is not useful to a civilized body; and it excludes all the vices, because there is not one which is not prejudicial to it.

It would be reasoning pitifully to imagine, with some corrupt persons, that men have a right to despise all the virtues, under pretence that they are only institutions of convenience. Wretch that thou art, wouldst thou live in a society which cannot subsist without them; wouldst thou enjoy the advantages which result from them, and wouldst thou think thyself dispensed from practising, or even from holding them in estimation? What could possibly be the object of them if they were not connected with man? Would this great name have been given to acts that were merely barren? On the contrary, it is their necessity which constitutes their essence and their merit. Let me once more repeat, that all morality consists in the maintenance of order. Its principles are steady and uniform, but the application of them varies sometimes according to the climate, and to the local and political situation of the people. Polygamy is in general more natural to hot than cold climates. Circumstances, however, of the times, in opposition to the rule of the climate, may order monogamy in one island of Africa, and permit polygamy in Kamtschatka, if one be a means of putting a stop to the excess of population at Madagascar, and the other of hastening its progress upon the coasts of the frozen sea. But nothing can authorise adultery and fornication in those two zones, when conventions have establish-

ed the laws of marriage or of property in the use of women.

It is the same thing with respect to all the lands and to property. What would be a robbery in a state, where property is justly distributed, becomes subsistence for life in a state where property is in common. Thus it is that theft and adultery were not permitted at Sparta ; but the public right allowed what would be considered elsewhere as theft and adultery. It was not the wife or the property of another person that was then taken, but the wife and the property of all, when the laws granted as a reward to dexterity every advantage it could procure to itself.

It is everywhere known what is just and unjust ; but the same ideas are not universally attached to the same actions. In hot countries, where the climate requires no clothing, modesty is not offended by nakedness ; but the abuse, whatever it may be, of the intercourse between the sexes, and premature attempts upon virginity, are crimes which must disgust. In India, where every thing conspires to make a virtue even of the act itself of generation, it is a cruelty to put the cow to death which nourishes man with her milk, and to destroy those animals whose life is not prejudicial, nor their death useful, to the human species. The Iroquois, or the Huron, who kill their father with a stroke of a club, rather than expose him to perish of hunger, or upon the pile of the enemy, think they do an act of filial piety in obeying the last wishes of their parent, who asks for death from them as a favour. The means the most opposite in appearance tend all equally to the same end, the maintenance and the prosperity of the body politic.

Such is that universal morality, which being inherent in the nature of man, is also inherent in the nature of societies ; that morality which may vary only in its application, but never in its essence ; that morality, in a word, to which all the laws must refer and be subordinate. According to this common rule of all our public and private actions, let us examine whether there ever were, or ever can be, good morals in Europe.

We live under the influence of three codes, the natural, the civil, and the religious code. It is evident, that as
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long as these three sorts of legislations shall be contradictory to each other, it will be impossible to be virtuous. It will sometimes be necessary to trample upon nature in order to obey social institutions, and to counteract social institutions to conform to the precepts of religion. The consequence of this will be, that while we are alternately infringing upon these several authorities, we shall respect neither of them, and that we shall neither be men, nor citizens, nor pious persons.

Good morals would therefore require previous reform, which should reduce these codes to identity. Religion ought neither to forbid nor to prescribe any thing to us but what is prescribed or forbidden by the civil law; and the civil and religious laws ought to model themselves upon natural law, which hath been, is, and will, always be the strongest. From whence it appears, that a true legislator hath not yet existed; that it was neither Moses, nor Solon, nor Numa, nor Mahommed, nor even Confucius; that it is not only in Athens, but also over all the globe, that the best legislation they could receive hath been given to man, not the best which could have been given to them; that in considering only morality, mankind would perhaps be less distant from happiness had they remained in the simple and innocent state of some savages; for nothing is so difficult as to eradicate inveterate and sanctified prejudice. For the architect who draws the plan of a great edifice, an even area is better than one covered with bad materials, heaped upon one another without method and without plan, and unfortunately connected together by the most durable cements of time, of custom, and of the authority of sovereigns and of priests. Then the wise man advances in his work only with timidity; he is exposed to greater risks, and loses more time in demolishing than in constructing.

Since the invasion of the barbarians in this part of the world, almost all governments have had no other foundation than the interest of one single man, or of a single corporate body, to the prejudice of society in general. Founded upon conquest, the effect of superior strength, they have only varied in the mode of keeping the people in subjection. At first war made victims of them, de-

voted either to the sword of their enemies, or to that of their masters. How many ages have passed away in scenes of blood and in the carnage of nations, that is to say, in the distribution of empires, before the terms of peace had deified that state of intestine war, which is called society or government?

When the feudal government had for ever excluded those who tilled the ground from the right of possessing it; when, by a sacrilegious collusion between the altar and the throne, the authority of God had been enforced by that of the sword; what effect had the morality of the gospel, but to authorize tyranny by the doctrine of passive obedience, but to confirm slavery by a contempt of the sciences; in a word, to add to the terror of the great, that of evil spirits? And what were morals with such laws? What they are at present in Poland, where the people, being without lands and without arms, are left to be massacred by the Russians, or insulted by the Prussians, and having neither courage nor sentiment, think it is sufficient if they are christians, and remain neutral between their neighbours and their lords palatine.

To a similar state of anarchy wherein morals had no distinguishing character, nor any degree of stability, succeeded the epidemic fury of the holy wars, by which nations were corrupted and degraded, by communicating to each other the contagion of vices with that of fanaticism. Morals were changed with the change of climate. All the passions were inflamed and heightened between the tombs of Jesus and Mohammed. From Palestine was imported a principle of luxury and ostentation, an inordinate taste for the spices of the East, a romantic spirit which civilized the nobility, without rendering the people more happy, consequently more virtuous: for if there be no happiness without virtue, virtue, on the other hand, will never support itself without a fund of happiness.

About two centuries after Europe had been depopulated by Asiatic expeditions, its transmigration in America happened. This revolution introduced an universal confusion, and blended the vices and productions of every climate with our own. Neither was any improvement made in the science of morality, because men were then

destroyed through avarice, instead of being massacred on account of religion. Those nations which had made the largest acquisitions in the New World, seemed to acquire at the same time all the stupidity, ferociousness, and ignorance, of the Old. They became the channel through which the vices and diseases of their country were communicated. They were poor and dirty in the midst of their wealth, debauched though surrounded with temples and with priests; they were idle and superstitious with all the sources of commerce, and the facility of acquiring information. But the love of riches likewise corrupted all other nations.

Whether it be war or commerce which introduces great riches into a state, they soon become the object of public ambition. At first men of the greatest power seize upon them: and as riches come into the hands of those who have the management of public affairs, wealth is confounded with honour in the minds of the people; and the virtuous citizen, who aspired to employments only for the sake of glory, aspires, without knowing it, to honour for the sake of advantage. Neither lands nor treasure, any more than conquests, are obtained with any other view but to enjoy them; and riches are enjoyed only for pleasure and the ostentation of luxury. Under these different ideas, they equally corrupt the citizen who possesses them, and the people who are seduced by their attraction. As soon as men labour only from a motive of gain, and not from a regard to their duty, the most advantageous situations are preferred to the most honourable. It is then we see the honour of a profession diverted, obscured, and lost in the paths that lead to wealth.

To the advantage of that false consideration at which riches arrive, are to be added the natural conveniences of opulence, a fresh source of corruption. The man who is in a public situation is desirous of having people about him; the honours he receives in public are not sufficient for him; he wants admirers, either of his talents, his luxury, or his profusion. If riches be the means of corruption, by leading to honours, how much more will they be so, by diffusing a taste for pleasure! Misery offers its chastity to sale, and idleness its liberty; the prince sets

the magistracy up to auction, and the magistrates set a price upon justice: the court sells employments, and placemen sell the people to the prince, who sells them again to the neighbouring powers, either in treaties of war, or subsidy; of peace, or exchange of territory. But in this fordid traffic, introduced by the love of wealth, the most evident alteration is that which it makes in the morals of women.

There is no vice which owes its origin to so many other vices, and which produces a greater number of them, than the incontinence of a sex, whose true attendant, and most beautiful ornament, is bashfulness and modesty.

I do not understand by incontinence, the promiscuous use of women; the wise Cato advised it in his republic; nor do I mean a plurality of them, which is the result of the ardent and voluptuous countries of the East; neither do I mean the liberty, whether indefinite or limited, which custom in different countries grants to the sex, of yielding to the desires of several men. This, among some people, is one of the duties of hospitality, among others, a means of improving the human race, and in other places an offering made to the gods, an act of piety consecrated by religion. I call incontinence, all intercourse between the two sexes forbidden by the laws of the state.

Why should this misdemeanour, so pardonable in itself, this action of so little consequence in its nature, so much confined in the gratification, have so pernicious an influence upon the morals of women? This is, I believe, a consequence of the importance we have attached to it. What will be the restraint of a woman, dishonoured in her own eyes, and in those of her fellow-citizens? What support will other virtues find in her soul, when nothing can aggravate her shame? The contempt of public opinion, one of the greatest efforts of wisdom, is seldom separated, in a feeble and timid mind, from the contempt of one's self. This degree of heroism cannot exist with a consciousness of vice. The woman who no longer respects herself, soon becomes insensible to censure and to praise; and without standing in awe of these two respectable phantoms, I know not what will be the rule of her conduct. There remains nothing but the rage of voluptuous-

ness that can indemnify her for the sacrifice she has made. This she feels, and this she persuades herself of; and thus, free from the constraint of the public consideration, she gives herself up to it without reserve.

Women take their resolution with much more difficulty than men, but when once they have taken it, they are much more determined. A woman never blushes when once she has ceased to blush. What will she not trample upon, when she hath triumphed over virtue? What idea can she have of that dignity, that decency, and that delicacy of sentiment, which, in the days of her innocence, directed and dictated her conversation, constituted her behaviour, and directed her dress? These will be considered only as childishness, as pusillanimity, or as the little intrigue of a pretended innocent person, who has parents to satisfy, and a husband to deceive; but a change of time brings on a change of manners.

To whatever degree of perversity she may have attained, it will not lead her to great enormities. Her weakness deprives her of the boldness to commit atrocious acts; but her habitual hypocrisy, if she hath not entirely thrown off the mask, will cast a tint of falsity upon her whole character. Those things which a man dares to attempt by force, she will attempt and obtain by artifice. A corrupt woman propagates corruption. She propagates it by bad example, by insidious counsels, and sometimes by ridicule. She hath begun by coquetry, which was addressed to all men; she hath continued by gallantry, so volatile in its propensities, that it is more easy to find a woman who hath never had any passions, than to find one who hath only been once impassioned; and at last she reckons as many lovers as she hath acquaintances, whom she recalls, expels, and recalls again, according to the want she hath of them, and to the nature of intrigues of all kinds into which she hath plunged herself. This is what she means by having known how to enjoy her best years, and to avail herself of her charms. It was one of these women, who had entered into the depths of the art, and who declared upon her death-bed, that she regretted only the pains she had taken to deceive the men; and that the most honest among them were the greatest dupes.

Under the influence of such manners; conjugal love is disdained, and that contempt weakens the sentiment of maternal tenderness, if it doth not even extinguish it. The most sacred and the most pleasing duties become troublesome; and when they have been neglected or broken, nature never renews them. The woman who suffers any man but her husband to approach her, hath no more regard for her family, and can be no more respected by them. The ties of blood are slackened; births become uncertain; and the son knows no more his father, nor the father his son.

I will therefore maintain it, that connections of gallantry complete the depravity of manners, and indicate it more strongly than public prostitution. Religion is extinct, when the priest leads a scandalous life; in the same manner virtue hath no asylum, when the sanctuary of marriage is profaned. Bashfulness is under the protection of the timid sex. Who is it that shall blush, when a woman doth not? It is not prostitution which multiplies acts of adultery; it is gallantry which extends prostitution. The ancient moralists, who pitied the unfortunate victims of libertinism; condemned without mercy the infidelity of married women; and not without reason. If we were to throw all the shame of vice upon the class of common women, other women would not fail soon to take honour to themselves from a limited intercourse, although it would be so much more criminal, as it was more voluntary and more illicit. The honest and virtuous women will no more be distinguished from the women of strong passions; a frivolous distinction will be established between the woman of gallantry and the courtesan; between gratuitous vice, and vice reduced by misery to the necessity of requiring a stipend; and these subtleties will betray a system of depravation. O fortunate and rude times of our forefathers, when there were none but virtuous or bad women: when all who were not virtuous were corrupted; and where an established system of vice was not excused by persevering in it.

But finally, what is the source of those delicate passions, formed by the mind, by sentiment, and by sympathy of character? the manner in which these passions

always terminate, shews plainly, that those fine expressions are only employed to shorten the defence and justify the defeat. Equally at the service of reserved and dissolute women, they are become almost ridiculous.

What is the result of this national gallantry? A premature libertinism, which ruins the health of young men before they are arrived to maturity, and destroys the beauty of the women in the prime of their life; a race of men without information, without strength, and without courage; incapable of serving their country; magistrates destitute of dignity and of principles; a preference of wit to good sense; of pleasures to duty; of politeness to the feelings of humanity; of the art of pleasing, to talents, to virtue; men absorbed in self-consideration, substituted to men who are serviceable; offers without reality; innumerable acquaintances, and no friends; mistresses, and no wives; lovers, and no husbands; separations and divorces; children without education; fortunes in disorder; jealous mothers, and hysterical women; nervous disorders, peevish old age, and premature death.

It is with difficulty that women of gallantry escape the dangers of the critical period of life. The vexation at the neglect which threatens them, completes the depravation of the blood and of the humours, at a time when the calm which arises from consciousness of an honest life might be salutary. It is dreadful to seek in vain, in one's self, the consolations of virtue, when the calamities of nature surround us.

Let us, therefore, talk no more of morality among modern nations; and if we wish to discover the cause of this degradation, let us search for it in its true principle.

Gold doth not become the idol of a people, and virtue does not fall into contempt, unless the bad constitution of the government leads on to such a corruption. Unfortunately it will always have this effect, if the government be so constituted, that the temporary interest of a single person, or of a small number, can with impunity prevail over the common and invariable interest of the whole. It will always produce this corruption, if those in whose hands authority is lodged can make an arbitrary use of it; can place themselves above the reach of justice;

can make their power administer to plundering, and their plunder to the continuance of abuses occasioned by their power. Good laws are maintained by good morals, but good morals are established by good laws. Men are what government makes them. To modify them, it is always armed with an irresistible force, that of public opinion; and the government will always make use of corruption when by its nature it is itself corrupt. In a word, the nations of Europe will have good morals when they have good governments. Let us conclude. But let us previously give a rapid sketch of the good and of the evil produced by the discovery of the East and West Indies.

THIS great event hath improved the construction of ships, navigation, geography, astronomy, medicine, natural history, and some other branches of knowledge; and these advantages have not been attended with any known inconvenience.

Reflections upon the good and the evil which the discovery of America hath done to Europe.

It hath procured to some empires vast domains, which have given splendour, power, and wealth, to the states which have founded them. But what expences have not been lavished to clear, to govern, or to defend, these distant possessions? When these colonies shall have acquired that degree of culture, knowledge, and population, which is suitable for them, will they not detach themselves from a country which hath founded its splendour upon their prosperity? We know not at what period this revolution will happen, but it must certainly take place.

Europe is indebted to the New World for a few conveniences and a few luxuries. But before these enjoyments were obtained, were we less healthy, less robust, less intelligent, or less happy? Are these frivolous advantages, so cruelly obtained, so unequally distributed, and so obstinately disputed, worth one drop of that blood which hath been spilt, and which will still be spilt for them? Are they to be compared to the life of a single man? And yet, how many lives have hitherto been destroyed, how many are at present devoted, and how many

will not hereafter be sacrificed, to supply chimerical wants, which we shall never be persuaded to get rid of, either by authority or reason?

The voyages undertaken upon all the seas have weakened the principle of national pride; they have inspired civil and religious toleration; they have revived the ties of original fraternity; have inspired the true principles of an universal system of morality, founded upon the identity of wants, of calamities, of pleasures, and of the analogies common to mankind under every latitude; they have induced the practice of benevolence towards every individual who appeals to it, whatever his manners, his country, his laws, and his religion, may be. But at the same time, the minds of men have been turned to lucrative speculation. The sentiment of glory hath been weakened; riches have been preferred to fame; and every thing which tended to the elevation of mankind hath visibly inclined to decay.

The New World hath multiplied specie amongst us. An earnest desire of obtaining it hath occasioned much exertion upon the face of the globe; but exertion is not happiness. Whose destiny hath been meliorated by gold and silver? Do not the nations who dig them from the bowels of the earth languish in ignorance, superstition, and pride, and all those vices which it is most difficult to eradicate, when they have taken deep root? Have they not lost their agriculture and their manufactures? Their existence, is it not precarious? If an industrious people, proprietors of a fertile soil, should one day represent to the other people; that they have too long carried on a losing trade with them, and that they will no longer give the thing for the representation; would not this sumptuary law be a sentence of death against that region, which hath none but riches of convention, unless the latter, driven by despair, should shut up its mines, in order to open furrows in the ground?

The other powers of Europe may perhaps have acquired no greater advantage from the treasures of America. If the repartition of them hath been equal or proportionate between them, neither of them have decreased in opulence or increased in strength. The analogies which ex-

isted in ancient times still exist. Let us suppose, that some nations should have acquired a greater quantity of metals than the rival nations, they will either bury them, or throw them into circulation. In the first instance, this is nothing more than the barren property of a superfluous mass of gold. In the second, they will acquire only a temporary superiority, because in a short space of time all vendible commodities will bear a price proportionate to the abundance of the signs which represent them.

Such are then the evils attached even to the advantages which we owe to the discovery of the East and West Indias. But how many calamities, which cannot be compensated, have not attended the conquest of these regions?

Have the devastators of them lost nothing by depopulating them for a long series of ages? If all the blood that hath been spilt in those countries had been collected into one common reservoir, if the dead bodies had been heaped up in the same plain, would not the blood and the carcases of the Europeans have occupied a great space in it? Hath it been possible speedily to fill up the void which these emigrants had left in their native land, infected with a shameful and cruel poison from the New World, which attacks even the sources of reproduction?

Since the bold attempts of Columbus and of Gama, a spirit of fanaticism, till then unknown, hath been established in our countries, which is that of making discoveries. We have traversed, and still continue to traverse, all the climates from one pole to another, in order to discover some continents to invade, some islands to ravage, and some people to spoil, to subdue, and to massacre. Would not the person who should put an end to this frenzy deserve to be reckoned among the benefactors of mankind?

The sedentary life is the only favourable one to population. The man who travels leaves no posterity behind him. The land forces have created a multitude of persons devoted to celibacy. The naval forces have almost doubled them, with this difference, that the latter are destroyed by illnesses on-board of ship, by shipwrecks, by fatigue, by bad food, and by the change of climate. A

soldier may return to some of the professions useful to society. A sailor is a sailor for ever. When he is discharged from the service, he is of no further use to his country, which is under the necessity of providing an hospital for him.

Long voyages have introduced a new species of anomalous savages: I mean those men who traverse so many countries, and who in the end belong to none; who take wives wherever they find them, and that only from motives of animal necessity; those amphibious creatures, who live upon the surface of the waters; who come on shore only for a moment; to whom every habitable latitude is equal; who have, in reality, neither fathers, mothers, children, brothers, relations, friends, nor fellow-citizens; in whom the most pleasing and the most sacred ties are extinct; who quit their country without regret; who never return to it without being impatient of going out again; and to whom the habit of living upon a dreadful element gives a character of ferociousness. Their probity is not proof against the crossing of the line; and they acquire riches in exchange for their virtue and their health.

This insatiable thirst of gold hath given birth to the most infamous, and the most atrocious of all traffics, that of slaves. Crimes against nature are spoken of, and yet this is not instanced as the most execrable of them. Most of the European nations have been stained with it, and a base motive of interest hath extinguished in their hearts all the sentiments due to our fellow-creatures. But, without these assistances, these countries, the acquisition of which hath cost so dear, would still be uncultivated. Let them then remain fallow, if, in order to cultivate them, it be necessary that man should be reduced to the condition of the brute, in the person of the buyer, of the seller, and of him who is sold.

Shall we not take into our account the complication which the settlements in the East and West-Indies have introduced in the machine of government? Before that period, the persons proper to hold the reins of government were infinitely scarce. An administration more embarrassed, hath required a more extensive genius, and greater depth of knowledge. The cares of sovereignty, divided between the citizens, place at the foot of the throne, and

the subjects fettered under the equator, or near the pole, have been insufficient for both the one and the other. Every thing hath fallen into confusion. The several states have languished under the yoke of oppression; and endless wars, or such were incessantly renewed, have harassed the globe, and stained it with blood.

Let us stop here, and consider ourselves as existing at the time when America and India were unknown. Let me suppose that I address myself to the most cruel of the Europeans in the following terms: There exist regions which will furnish thee with rich metals, agreeable clothing, and delicious food; but read this history, and behold at what price the discovery is promised to thee. Dost thou wish or not that it should be made? Is it to be imagined that there exists a being infernal enough to answer this question in the affirmative? Let it be remembered, that there will not be a single instant in futurity when my question will not have the same force.

Nations, I have discovered to you on your dearest interests. I have placed before your eyes the benefits of nature, and the fruits of industry. As ye are too frequently the occasion of your mutual unhappiness, you must have felt how the jealousy of avarice, how pride and ambition, remove far from your common weal the happiness that presents itself to you by peace and commerce. I have recalled that happiness which has been removed from you. The sentiments of my heart have been warmly expressed in favour of all mankind, without distinction of sect or country. Men are all equal in my sight, by the reciprocal relation of the same wants and the same calamities; as they are all equal in the eyes of the Supreme Being, through the connection between their weakness and his power. I have not been ignorant that, subject, as ye were, to masters, your destiny must principally depend upon them; and that while I was speaking to you of your calamities, I was censuring them for their errors or their crimes. This reflection hath not depressed my courage. I have never conceived, that the sacred respect due to humanity could possibly be irreconcilable with that which is due to those who should be its natural protectors. I have been transported in idea into the councils of the ruling powers. I have spoken without disguise and without fear, and have

no reason to accuse myself of having betrayed the great cause I have ventured to plead. I have informed princes of their duties, and of the rights of the people. I have traced to them the fatal effects of that inhuman power which is guilty of oppression, and of that whose indolence and weakness suffers it. I have sketched all around them portraits of your misfortunes, and they cannot but have been sensibly affected by them. I have warned them, that if they turned their eyes away, those true but dreadful pictures would be engraven on the marble of their tombs, and accuse their ashes, while posterity trampled on them.

But talents are not always equal to our zeal. Undoubtedly I have stood in need of a greater share of that penetration which discovers expedients, and of that eloquence which enforces truth. Sometimes, perhaps, the sentiments of my heart have contributed to raise my genius; but most frequently I have perceived myself overwhelmed with my subject, and conscious of my own inability.

May writers, on whom nature has bestowed greater abilities, complete by their masterpieces what my essays have begun! Under the auspices of philosophy, may there be one day extended, from one extremity of the world to the other, that chain of union and benevolence which ought to connect all civilized people! May they never more carry amongst savage nations the example of vice and oppression! I do not flatter myself that, at the period of that happy revolution, my name will be still in remembrance. This feeble work, which will have only the merit of having brought forth others better than itself, will doubtless be forgotten. But I shall, at least, be able to say, that I have contributed as much as was in my power to the happiness of my fellow-creatures, and pointed out the way, though perhaps at a distance, to improve their destiny. This agreeable thought will stand me in the stead of glory. It will be the delight of my old age, and the consolation of my latest moments.

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